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# CALVINIST + CONTACT

## DUTCH-CANADIAN CHRISTIAN WEEKLY

KERSTNUMMER 1965







Gezegend

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## BIJ DE VOORPLAAT

"HET LICHT SCHIJNT IN DE DUISTERNIS —  
en de duisternis heeft het niet gegrepen.

HIJ KWAM TOT HET ZIJNE —

en de Zijnen hebben Hem niet aangenomen.

Doch allen, die Hem aangenomen hebben, hun heeft  
Hij MACHT gegeven om kinderen Gods te worden."

Dit is nu eigenlijk de hele boodschap, die de tekenaar  
Chris Stoffel Overvoorde heeft willen brengen in de tekening,  
die hij voor ons kerstnummer heeft gemaakt. Het is de  
boodschap van Johannes 1.

Neemt u er maar even tijd voor af om de tekening (op  
een kleine afstand) te bezien en blijf er maar even naar  
kijken. Zij is niet zo gemakkelijk te verstaan. Maar dat is  
de boodschap uit Johannes 1 ook niet.

Wij zeggen zo licht, dat de wereld in het duister ligt.  
Maar het is gemakkelijker gezegd, dan gerealiseerd. Wij  
kunnen het ons maar moeilijk indenken, dat het stikdonker  
was, en dat het Licht inbraken moest. Ziet U de kracht  
van het licht op de tekening? Daar zit vaart en stuwung  
in! Er zat zo'n kracht in het Kerstgebeuren, dat er een  
heel heirleger van engelen aan te pas kwam.

En tóch heeft de duisternis het niet gegrepen.

Maar diegenen, die Hem hebben aangenomen, heeft Hij  
MACHT gegeven om kinderen Gods te worden.

Toen de herders er voor de eerste keer mee in aanraking  
kwamen, zijn zij er bang van geworden. En een herder in  
die dagen was niet gauw bang. Maar toen zij alles gezien  
hadden, hebben zij het aan iedereen verteld, die het maar  
horen wilde. En allen, die het hoorden, verbáásdten zich  
over wat die herders vertelden. Zo MACHTIG was het.

Dit was de eerste Kerstdag.

Nu is het 1965. Maar er is niets veranderd.

Ook nu zijn er tallozen, die Hem niet willen aannemen.

Maar die Hem wel aangenomen hebben, hebben MACHT  
gekregen om kinderen Gods te worden. En daar wacht de  
wereld op. Onwetend misschien, maar zij wacht er op. "Met  
reikhalzend verlangen," zei Paulus (Rom. 8), "wacht de  
schepping op het openbaar worden van de zonen Gods."

## Kerstmis in Canada

door MARY CAROL WILSON

(Canadian Scene) — Kerstmis  
werd in Canada voor het eerst ge-  
vierd in 1535 toen Jacques Cartier  
met 110 man genoodzaakt was de  
winter door te brengen in een klein-  
ne uit palen opgebouwde verster-  
king aan de oever van de St. Croix  
River dicht bij het Indiaanse dorp-  
je Stadacona, de plaats van het  
huidige Quebec.

Het was geen vrolijk Kerstfeest  
dat dit handjevol mensen daar  
vierde die winter. De Indianen wa-  
ren zeer onvriendelijk geworden,  
de voedselvoorraad was schaars en  
de kou intens. Al wat ze hadden  
was de herinnering aan vroegere  
Kerstdagen, een schraal portie van  
de ingevroren botten en hun fanta-  
sie, die werd aangewakkerd door  
de kleurrijke verhalen van Chief  
Donnacanna, die probeerde hen  
met verhalen over verborgen schat-  
ten verder het binnenland in te  
lokken.

Honderd jaar later begonnen de  
Jezuïeten hun pogingen om de In-  
dianen tot het Christendom te be-  
keren. Daar deze Indianen niets  
afwisten van stallen, herders en  
wijzen paste men het Kerstverhaal  
aan hun omgeving aan, daarbij ge-  
bruik makend van de hun bekende  
Great Spirit of Manitou. De India-  
nen maakten er zelf nog het een  
en ander bij, waardoor thans, be-  
halve dat wat de zendingen hun  
geleerd hebben, verschillende le-  
genden het Kerstverhaal omringen.  
Zo geloven zij bijvoorbeeld dat in  
de Kerstnacht op slag van twaalf  
alle herten in de bossen de kop  
buigen en knielen in de richting  
van Bethlehem, waar de grote Ma-  
nitou hun de Verlosser zond. Zelfs  
de Indianen die geen Christenen  
zijn, nemen deel aan de Kerstfeest-  
viering, hopen zodoende iets te ont-  
vangen van de blijdschap die de  
Christenen in dit jaargetijde met  
zich mee schijnen te dragen.

Sedert die tijd zijn uit velerlei  
landen mensen naar Canada geko-  
men, met zich meebrengend de ge-  
bruiken en legenden uit hun eigen  
land. Soms moesten in de eenzaam-  
heid van een boshut of op de uitge-  
streckte prairies de vertrouwde ge-  
rechten vervangen worden door be-  
renvrees of vreemde vis- of vogel-  
gerechten, maar ieder gezin pro-  
beerde toch zoveel mogelijk de tra-  
dities vast te houden.

En hoe rijk en gevarieerd zijn  
de Kerstgebruiken daardoor in Ca-  
nada geworden. Van 6 december  
tot 7 januari wanneer de Canade-  
zen die uit de Oekraïne stammen  
dit doen, viert velerlei mensen  
op velerlei wijze het feest van  
Christus' geboorte. Religie, afkomst  
en land van herkomst vindt men  
in deze viering weerspiegeld.

Zoals bij de Indianen reeds het  
geval was viert ook thans vele  
niet-Christenen dit Christelijk  
feest. Maar de boodschap van  
Kerstmis wordt niet gevonden in  
zakelijke kopen van geschenken, de  
vrolijke verpakkingen en lekker-  
nijen. Voor sommige Canadezen is  
het een tijd van vasten, voor an-  
deren van overdadig smullen. Ieder  
volgt hierin de gebruiken die hem  
van kindsaf zijn bijgebracht. Het  
werkelijke Kerstfeest kan echter  
slechts in Uw hart gevierd worden.

## BETHLEHEM

Geboorte van de Heer! o gouden nacht,  
toen alle hemelen stralend opsprongen  
en engelen en mensen samen zongen,  
neerknielend bij het Kind, dat vrede bracht —

een boodschap, wonderbaar, voor onze oren:  
liefde, die kwam temidden van de haat,  
God's vaderkus op het verminkt gelaat  
van onze wereld, diep in schuld verloren —

één blijde nacht — toen werd het als tevoren  
weer donker, want de hemelen gingen dicht...  
waar is nu, Bethlehem, je stralend licht?  
waar is je ster, waar zijn je engelenkoren?

het ging voorbij en soms heb ik gedacht:  
— dwaas, daar ik levenslang een kind zal wezen,  
dat niet kan wachten, tot het komt "na dezen" —  
je hebt de mensheid slechts een droom gebracht —

en droom? zie, altijd zoeken hier nog wijzen  
hun ster, die vals schijnt aan de horizon,  
geen volk, dat ware vrede vinden kon:  
de wereld werd slechts bitterder en grijs

en rond haar, als een bloedbesmeurde keten,  
rijen de monumenten zich aaneen,  
prijz van ons falen, uitgehakt in steen...  
God's Redder wordt zelfs op Zijn feest vergeten —

MAAR LUIDT DE KLOKKEN WEER! van toen  
af aan  
heeft God Zijn hart ons tot een thuis gegeven  
en al wie weet: mijn Heiland is in leven,  
zal Bethlehem's geschenk opnieuw verstaan.

Tini Van Ameyde.

#### VOOR DE VAKANTIE

Als U nog geen plannen ge-  
maakt hebt voor uw vakantie van  
dit jaar, dan heeft de Holland-  
Amerika Lijn een idee.

Het s.s. Rijndam zal een twaalf-  
daagse trip maken, te beginnen in  
Montreal en Quebec op 25 juli. De  
tocht gaat via de Saguenay River  
naar Bermuda. Daarna gaat het  
schip terug naar het Noorden via  
St. Pierre, Miquelon en Gaspé. Op  
5 augustus wordt het schip in  
Montreal en Quebec terug ver-  
wacht. De kosten voor de trip  
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# Het geheim en de schoonheid van de Christelijke wetenschap

II

In ons vorige artikel sprak ik over de rijkdom die wij als Calvinisten of liever gereformeerde christenen mogen bezitten in ons geloof en levensbeschouwing. U herinnert zich waarschijnlijk, dat ik vertelde van de vergadering, die in Ottawa aan de Carlton Universiteit gehouden werd door een groep studenten, waarvan velen lid waren van de "InterVarsity Christian Fellowship". Nadat de officiële vergadering afgelopen was duurde de discussie maar voort. Deze liet bij mij de indruk achter van de rijkdom van het gereformeerde beginsel en ik wil daarbij nu nader stilstaan met het oog op een dubbel aspect van deze zaak.

Het eerste punt is, dat wij gereformeerde christenen niet of niet meer opgevoed worden in vrees en angst voor de wetenschap. Ik ontmoette eens iemand, die behoorde tot een bepaalde evangelische groep, waarvan ik de juiste naam maar liever verzwijg in dit verband. Op mijn vraag of hij een gelovige was en Jezus liefhad als zijn Heiland en Heer, antwoordde hij met een warm, overtuigd en hartgrondig "ja". Maar mijn volgende vraag, of hij ook het Heilig Avondmaal vierde, moest hij ontkennend beantwoorden. "Waarom niet?" zo vroeg ik. "Ja, ziet U," zei hij, "ik ben onderwijzer geworden en dat is in onze kringen haast onverenigbaar met de viering van het Heilig Avondmaal." Tot mijn verbazing hoorde ik, dat bijna elk beroep beschouwd wordt als een wereldse aangelegenheid. De wetenschap is bijzonder gevaarlijk. Het herinnerde mij aan de sekte van de Hutterites, die op de Canadese prairies zo invloedrijk is; het is zelfs een wet van deze godsdienstige groep, dat het onderwijs moet ophouden na de vierde klas; dat is genoeg kennis van de boze wereld.

Ook in de groep christenstudenten in Ottawa waren er van verschillende stromingen, zoals de Pinksterbeweging, die eigenlijk alleen maar kunnen studeren met een schuldige geweten. Thuis wordt hun gevraagd: "Waarom ga je eigenlijk naar die goddeloze universiteit? Zij die veel willen weten, vallen in de strikken van de Satan!" En niet zelden worden zij bedreigd met de eeuwige vlammen van het helse vuur.

Nu zullen wij de laatste zijn om te ontkennen, dat er inderdaad grote gevaren zijn aan de universiteit. Maar denkt men dan werkelijk, dat men de wereld kan ontluchten door aan de kinderen en de opgroeiende jeugd de wetenschap te onthouden? U ziet tot

welke misvattingen het Anabaptisme, dat de houding van de wereld-mijding predikt, kan komen. Het herinnert mij aan de man uit New England, die in de achttiende eeuw tegen de schoolmeester zei: "De Bijbel en rekenen, dat is alles wat mijn jongen behoeft te leren". Welk een voorrecht is het voor onze jongeren te mogen studeren in het besef, dat de studie niet per sé goddeloos is, noch een noodzakelijk kwaad, maar behoort beschouwd en behandeld te worden als de vervulling van een taak waartoe God ons roept. Zeker, wij studeren wat wij graag willen en wij leren het vak waarvoor we aangegrepen hebben, maar ook dit behoort in het algemeen gesproken tot de roeping en tot de wijze, waarop God ons roept.

Hiermee is echter nog niet beantwoord de tweede vraag, namelijk of de wetenschap noodzakelijkerwijs een werelds karakter heeft. Is studeren altijd, in alle tijden en onder alle omstandigheden, het onderwezen worden in "de wijsheid van de Egyptenaren"? Op dit punt komt de schoonheid van een christelijke wetenschap nog meer naar voren. Als christenen immers weten wij, dat de Bijbel ons leert, dat wat de wijsheid der Egyptenaren of der Babyloniers of der Grieken of der Romeinen genoemd mag worden, nooit het ideaal en het echte van de wijsheid kan zijn. Men kan het wetenschappelijk bedrijf wel verdelen in drieërlei functie. De wetenschap tracht zoveel mogelijk informatie te verzamelen in ieder bepaald vak over dat bepaalde aspect dat dat vak onderzoekt. In de faculteit der rechten schrijven de geleerden boekdelen vol over bijvoorbeeld de huwelijkswetgeving over heel de wereld en in alle tijden. In de economie is de kostprijs van schier alle dingen van het grootste belang, enz. Daarna echter wordt deze informatie door de menselijke geest gevormd tot één geheel. Iedere wetenschap bouwt uit alle afzonderlijke informatie en gegevens een geheel op. Dit is de tweede fase. Informatie wordt tot kennis. Juridische feiten worden onderworpen aan de norm van het juridische, economische waarden aan de norm van het economische. Maar ook hier kan de wetenschap nog niet tot haar volle bloei en ontwikkeling komen. Het is maar al te waar, dat vele geleerden in deze tijd het bij hun eigen vakwetenschap willen laten. Er is ook een vakwetenschappelijk Anabaptisme. Dat is heel sterk tegenwoordig; de tandarts zegt: "Ik trek kiezen, ik koop een zomercottage, ik doe wat ik wil, wat kan mij de wereld verder schelen". De houding "wat kan het mij schelen", die vroeger officieel niet aanvaard-

baar geacht werd voor de ontwikkelde, "beschaafde" cultuurn mens, wordt thans veel meer openlijk, brutaal en schaamteloos beleiden.

In zijn Unionville lezingen over de universiteit en haar basis, merkt Prof. Dr. H. Van Riessen terecht op, dat het doel van de universiteit steeds wijsheid geweest is, dus niet alleen maar kennis. Nadat de wetenschap uit vele gegevens een geheel van kennis heeft gebouwd, moet dat geheel van vakwetenschappelijke kennis dienstbaar gemaakt worden aan heel het leven. Want tenslotte is het weten geen doel in zichzelf, het moet leiden tot nadere integratie, kennis moet wijsheid worden. Hier vooral zien wij hoe de wegen uiteengaan; de vraag bijvoorbeeld "wat is recht in het huwelijksrecht" is een vraag die door de wetenschap zelf niet meer beantwoord kan worden. Waar vinden wij de laatste toetssteen, waar de meter waaraan alle waarden getoetst kunnen worden? Waar is de steen der wijzen, die ons laat zien wat wijs is in de wijsheid van Egyptenaren, Babyloniërs, Grieken, Romeinen enz. en hoe wijs die wijsheid is. Hier ziet de Christen, dat wat wijs heet in de wereld, ook in de gesecculariseerde wetenschap, dikwijls wijs is ondanks haar beoefenaren. Veel wijsheid wordt aan de rede toegeschreven, die de rede toch eigenlijk niet bezit en zelfs door haar dikwijls wordt ontkend. Men zou kunnen zeggen, dat de rede, als zij soeverein is, elke mogelijkheid van het bereiken van wijsheid moet ontkennen.

Dat alle wetenschap bepaald wordt door geloof werd zeer duidelijk gezien en uitgelegd door Dr. Abraham Kuiper in zijn waarlijk magistrale rede "Souvereiniteit in eigen kring" bij de inwijding van de Vrije Universiteit. Hij toont aan hoe het christelijk beginsel ook in de natuurwetenschappen onmisbaar is. Men hoort nog wel eens gemakkelijk de spot drijven met "christelijk rekenen", maar zulke spotters worden toch wel even stil, als zij zich ervan bewust worden, dat het de mens, de beelddrager Gods is, die rekent, die alleen maar rekenen kan. Ook de meest inge-

wikkelde computer kan niet echt "rekenen". Vergun me één citaat. Kuiper zei al in 1880:

"Ik stem toe, indien onze natuurkundige faculteit zich stipt bepaalde tot meten en wegen, de wigge van het beginsel zou althans in haar deurpaneel niet zijn in te drijven. Maar wie doet dat? Welk natuurkundige opereert zonder hypothesen? Wie is er, die als mens en niet als meter zijn wetenschap beoefent, wat hij ziet, niet beziet door subjectieve glazen; en wat hij niet meer van de cirkel zien kan, niet bijstippelt naar altijd subjectieve mening? Wie de prijs u voorreken van het bedrukte papier en het aantal druppels inkt, dat door de pers verdukt werd, weet die soms uw boek dat ge uitgaat, uw vlugschrift, uw zangbundel in hoger zin te schatten? Gaat in wat strengen vlozigt en een elstramen soms de waarde van het keurigst borduurwerk op? Of liever nog, ligt niet gans de schepping als één verrukkend schilderstuk voor aller natuurkundige ogen, en is met het goud van de lijst, die er om, en de ellen doek die er onder, en de ponden verf, die er aan zitten, dan heus de pracht van dat kunststuk gewaardeerd?"

Hoe rijk zijn wij als Christenen; de ware Steen der wijzen is ons niet onbekend. Het is de Steen, die door de bouwlieden verachtelijk werd een plaats ontzegd. Hij is Christus, "de wijsheid Gods", 1 Cor. 1:21, en Hij is de laatste waarde, de toetssteen, omdat in Hem alle dingen bestaan, Col. 1:17. Daarom behoeft de Christen niet

alleen niet af te zien van wetenschap, maar is het zelfs zijn voorrecht om alleen tot echte, blijvende wetenschap te komen, tot een integratie van informatie en wetenschappelijk onderzoek, van kennis van het eigen vak en het geheel van de scheppingsstructuur, in wijsheid, echte wijsheid, die het licht van het levende Woord Gods laat schijnen over heel het leven. Het was vooral ook op dit punt, dat vele vragen werden gesteld. Na afloop zei een student tegen mij: "Zo heb ik het nog nooit gezien, wij moeten hier meer van horen en meer van weten". Nogmaals dan: hoe rijk zijn wij.

Op grond van deze overwegingen zou ik willen eindigen met een dubbele conclusie. Enerzijds deze, dat wij zeer dankbaar zijn, dat wij een vereniging hebben voor Reformed Scientific Studies. Laat men daarom alles doen wat mogelijk is om deze organisatie te steunen in haar moeie en noodzakelijke taak. Door God's genade hebben wij een inzicht waarvan vele evangelische Christenen mede kunnen profiteren. Hierom moet een ieder alles doen wat maar mogelijk is om deel te nemen aan dit grote werk op het gebied van onderwijs en wetenschap.

Anderzijds echter dient ook de Association for Reformed Scientific Studies zich telkens weer en telkens meer bewust te worden van haar plaats en karakter. Zij dient zodanig georganiseerd (gereorganiseerd) te worden en zich zodanig te openbaren, dat allen die het licht van Christus willen laten schijnen in de wereld van het weten en kennen, zich in haar thuis

voelen en niet het gevoel krijgen, dat ze door de mazen van een net naar binnen moeten slippen. Zo'n vereniging wekke niet de indruk een geheim genootschap te zijn. Wie het ideaal der christelijke wetenschap hoog houdt, zal ook trachten allen te verenigen die hun bijdrage hieraan kunnen leveren. Een Association for Reformed Scientific Studies, die haar roeping verstaat, zal alles doen wat mogelijk is om, in de woorden van ds. K. Hart, heel het volk wakker te maken.

R. Koolstra



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 In Denemarken is het een vrij algemene gewoonte om met Kerstmis boerekoek met rijstpudding te eten.	 In Polen eet men bij voorkeur zoete wafels.
 In half Italië is de nationale kerstlekkernij een suikerachtige kastanjeborstplaat, de "tortone" genaamd.	 In ca. 40 landen is het een goede gewoonte om met Kerstmis een feestelijk diner op tafel te brengen.

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Warm 1 kop melk op. Roer in ½ kop korrelsuiker, ½ kop Blue Bonnet Margarine en 1 theelepeltje zout. Koel af tot lauw. Intussen, meet af een ½ kop lauw water in een kom. Roer een 1 theelepeltje korrelsuiker in. Strooi de inhoud van 1 pakje Fleischmann's Snel Rijzende Droge Gist in. Laat 10 minuten staan. Roer DAN grondig.  
Roer de lauwe melkmengsel in en 2 goed geklutste eieren. Bedek 1 kop gehakte geglaaceerde kersen met 1 kop gezeefde bloem voor alle doeleinden geschikt. Voeg gismengsel aan toe met 2 extra koppen bloem. Klop totdat smedig. Meng nog meer bloem eraan toe om een zachte deeg te maken (ongeveer 2 koppen). Leg het op een licht geblomde plank; kneed totdat het smedig en elastisch is. Plaats in een ingevette kom; vet bovenkant in. Bedek. Laat het rijzen op een warme plek, tochtvrij, totdat in omvang verdubbeld is, ongeveer 1 uur.  
Slaat het deeg neer. Breng het over op een licht geblomde plank; verdeel in 3 stukken. Vorm elk stuk in een bal en plaats in 3 ingevette 1 pond koffieblikken. Bedek. Laat het rijzen als voorheen voor ongeveer 1½ uur. Bak in een voorverwarmede matige oven (350°F) van 35 tot 40 minuten. Maak 3 broden. Glaceer de bovenkanten met banketbakkers gespoten suiker.



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CANADA  
MINISTER OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Ottawa, Christmas, 1965.

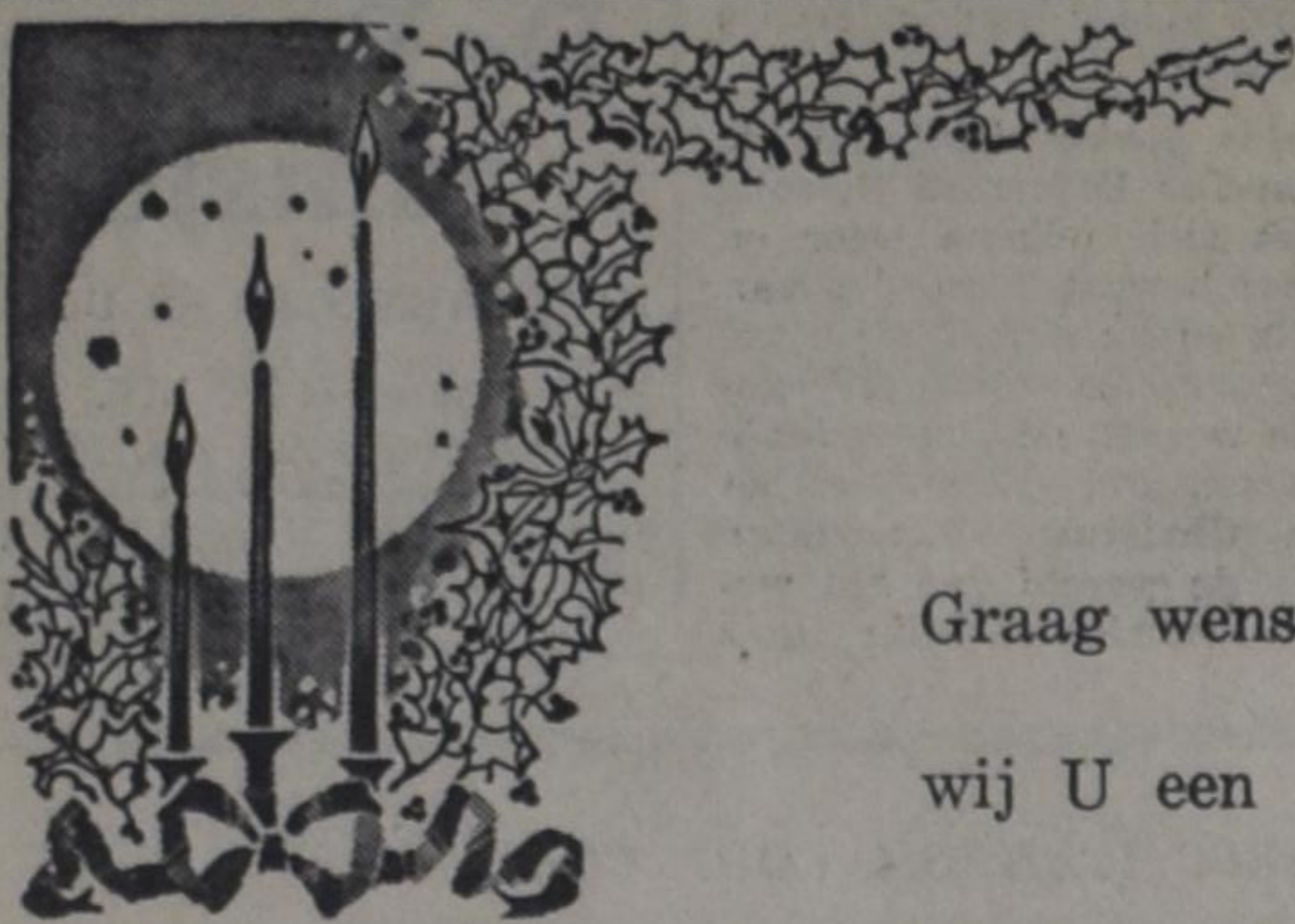
Dear Mr. Editor:

Through the years, colourful customs and traditions — the legacies of many lands — have added a festive note to the celebration of Christmas.

This wonderful season of festivity has a deep spiritual meaning for all of us. The message of Christmas is for all year and for all time. It means the birth of new hopes, new joys, a new gladness. It means peace and goodwill among men.

It is in a warm fellowship of spirit that I extend to you and to your readers my sincere greetings. May your Christmas be merry and the New Year joyous and happy.

Yours sincerely,  
John R. Nicholson.



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## KERSTMIS in vroeger dagen

(Canadian Scene) — Het Kerstfeest werd voor de eerste maal op Canadese bodem gevierd in het met palissaden versterkte fort, dat Jacques Cartier en zijn mannen hadden gebouwd aan de monding van de St. Charles rivier (zij noemden het de Ste. Croix) en op de schepen die lagen vastgevroren in de St. Lawrence. Het is geen vreugdevolle dag geweest voor de geharde mannen uit Normandië, die daar bijeengekomen waren in hun koude blokhutten of de al even koude scheepsruimen. Hun toestand was zo goed als wanhopig — verlaten in de wildernis en omgeven door inboorlingen, die ze niet durfden te vertrouwen. Vijf en twintig van hen waren dan ook reeds omgekomen, voor de schepen eindelijk door de lente uit hun boeien werden verlost en ze naar Frankrijk konden terugkeren. Toch hebben ze dapper en toegewijd het kerstfeest gevierd.

Het was in Nova Scotia geweest, dat de eerste kerstdienst in Canada is gehouden, en wel in 1749 in Government House in Halifax. Hoewel Government House in die dagen slechts een ruw opgetrokken gebouwtje was in een pas gevestigde militaire nederzetting, waren de ernst en

de moed van deze mensen toch zodanig, dat de grondslag werd gelegd voor de opbouw van Canada. Met heimwee in het hart en een diep verlangen naar vrouw en kinderen, die zich nog niet bij hen hadden kunnen voegen, en zonder de zo vertrouwde Kerstfestiviteiten, hadden deze pioniers nochtans een vast vertrouwen in God, in zichzelf en in het nieuwe land, waar hun toekomst lag.

De United Empire Loyalists waren de eerste Britse kolonisten in het huidige Ontario. Voor het Kerstfeest van 1782 werden hier de eerste Yule logs gehakt en naar huis gesleept om het haardvuur op te vrolijken. Dat was dan ook de enige vrolijke noot, want het zou nog verschillende jaren duren, voor het land de eerste behoorlijke oogst opleverde en men gebruikte dan ook zemelen om cake te bakken, terwijl look, knopen van de bomen en zelfs bladeren werden gebruikt, om fijnge-malen voor voedsel te kunnen dienen.

Tijdens Kerstmis 1790 werd het eerste huwelijk gesloten in Upper Canada. De enige geestelijke in deze streek reisde 50 mijl te paard van Kingston naar een blokhut in Maitland, waar te midden van

dennegroen en rode lijsterbessen het huwelijk werd voltrokken.

Aan de Atlantische kust opende de Trinity Church in Saint John in New Brunswick op kerstdag, 1791, voor het eerst haar deuren. Bij die gelegenheid werd het Koninklijk Wapen, dat de Loyalisten uit de raadskamer van Massachusetts hadden meegebracht, officieel ingewijd. Het was een zeer gedenkwaardige dag voor deze kolonisten, die nog slechts acht jaar tevoren voet aan wal hadden gezet in een woest en onherbergzaam land, waar ze het bos moesten weggappen om een plaats te vinden waar ze hun tenten konden opslaan. "Niets dan wildernis zover onze ogen reikten, de vrouwen en kinderen konden dan ook onmogelijk hun tranen bedwingen", schreef een van de uitgeweken; en de grootmoeder van Sir Leonard Tilley (een van de vaders van de confederatie) vertelden haar nakroost altijd: "Ik klom

naar de top van Chipman's Hill en keek de zeilboten na, die in de verte verdwenen, en er kwam zo'n gevoel van verlatenheid over me, dat ik, die gedurende de gehele oorlog geen traan had gelaten (de Amerikaanse revolutie), nu op het vochtige mos neerviel en met m'n baby in mijn armen lange tijd huilde."

Aan de westkust was het nieuwe Fort Victoria net voor Kerstmis 1843 klaargekomen. Binnen in het fort, door een hoge palissade omgeven, waren opslagplaatsen, een Indiaanse ruilwinkel, een algemene handelspost en woonverblijven voor twee gezinnen. Middenin bevond zich een klokkenstoel, waarvan de klok werd geluid voor de maaltijden, voor bruiloften, sterfgevallen, kerkdiensten, brandalarm en algemene waarschuwingen. Maar het luidde voor de eerste maal op die Kerstmorgen, begeleid door kanonschoten vanaf het schip "Cadnor".



### Geboorte-nacht

't Is nacht in Bethlems dreven.  
Dan plots . . . De Hemel breekt  
en legioenen engelen zweven  
omlaag, door stralend licht omgeven,  
en aller sterren pracht verbleekt.

De aarde dreunt van hunne zangen.  
't Is 't nieuwe lied, dat — nooit gehoord —  
lang in de hemel bleef gevangen —  
maar nu naar buiten berst en lange  
en sterk door d' aardse stilte boort.

Den hogen groten God zij ere  
tot in Zijn heiligdom.  
De hemel zelf zal voor den Here  
haar in- en uitgang doen verkeren  
in roem, die luide klinkt alom.

Gods vrede komt op aarde dagen,  
Zijn vrede en gerechtigheid,  
door een kindje ingedragen  
in de wereld. — 't Welbehagen  
Gods is ons in eeuwigheid.

Weer is het nacht in Bethlems dreven,  
een stille en een heilige nacht,  
want in zijn duister is geheven  
het grote Licht, het Licht van 't Leven,  
de Morgenster, Die blinkt in pracht.

C. Speijer.



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a most happy  
holiday season,  
with sincere  
thanks for the  
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De poort naar 't nieuwe jaar gaat ons straks open  
De deur van 't oude valt onherroep'lijk dicht  
Al wat wij deden — en wat wij verzuimden  
Is opgeschreven voor Uw eindgericht.

Hetgeen wij deden — en wat wij verzuimden  
(Ach, wij bedoelden het meestal wel goed) —  
Maar zondebaar kunt U het niet gebruiken  
Het roept om reiniging in Jezus' bloed.

Nog vóór dit jaar voorbijglijdt in 't verleden  
vergunt Ge ons te knielen voor Uw Kind.

Nog vóór het eindgericht is aangevangen  
Ontvouw Ge ons hoezeer U ons bemint.

Dit is het wonder van Uw komen in de wereld  
— er is geen sterveling die dit berot,  
Dat U, mijn God, wijs wij nog zondaars waren  
Ons in Uw Zoon reeds zó hebt liefgehad.

**W**ij zijn blij en dankbaar dat wij in het afgelopen jaar  
U weer mochten voorzien van ons product,  
dat we onze productie omhoog zagen gaan en  
dat we onze zaak weer verder konden uitbreiden.

**W**ij hopen onze uiterste best te doen om U in het nieuwe jaar  
weer een heerlijke zoute en zure haring aan te bieden,  
de prijs ervan zo redelijk mogelijk te houden en U  
op alle mogelijke manieren van dienst te kunnen zijn.

**O**ok maken wij graag van deze gelegenheid gebruik om U  
gezellige Feestdagen toe te wensen,  
een gelukkig en voorspoedig 1966 en  
de Vrede van het Kerstkind voor altijd,

**W**ant in deze jachtige, onrustige en vaak angstaanjagende wereld is  
echte levensvreugde,  
bezinging en rust en  
innerlijke vrede alleen te vinden

in een vast vertrouwen en  
een onwankelbaar geloof in  
het Kerstkind in de kribbe . . .

**C. PARLEVLIET  
IMPORTER HOLLAND HERRING  
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## Ballade van de Magiërs

Zij rijden door het vallen van de nacht,  
drie moede mannen en hun karavaan . . .  
vaag, achter hen, rumoert Jeruzalem,  
de stad van vrede, die geen vrede bracht.

Hun ogen speuren nog het wreed gelaat,  
de sluwe grijs boven het koningskleed.  
Herodes, slechts op eigen macht bedacht,  
heeft hen verkild met zijn verborgen haat.

Hoe lang geleden zagen zij de ster  
haar boodschap spellen, een fontein van licht!  
Hoe vrolijk waren zij op reis gegaan  
naar 't land van Israël, zo vreemd en ver!

En, als beveiligd door een sterke Hand,  
trokken zij west, door vlakke en woestijn,  
beklommen bergen met hun rijke last,  
maar zie: geen rover had hen overmand.

Tot eindelijk — kroon op hun zware tocht —  
Jeruzalem in zonlicht voor hen blonk  
en zij zich meldden bij een trots paleis,  
waar niemand ooit naar God's bedoeling zocht.

Een prins? een nieuwgeboren koningskind?  
O, wat een kostelijke grap! De staf  
had moeite niet te schudden van de lach . . .  
alleen de koning leek hun goedgezind.

En op zijn order kwam het Sanhedrin  
tezamen, voor een plechtig onderzoek.  
Heilige boeken werden uitgerold:  
was er een profetie met plaatsnaam in?

Ah, Micha! Luister naar zijn grijze stem,  
die over zeven eeuwen heen u spreekt  
van vrijheid en van vrede eindeloos:  
de grote Leider komt uit Bethlehem!

Herodes, de geslepen diplomaat,  
schonk hun een audiëntie in 't geheim.  
Hij weet nu alles. Zelfs de datum, dat  
de ster verscheen . . . Zijn laatste woord was: "Gaat

en doet nauwkeurig navraag naar dit kind.  
U weet, ook ik verlang er naar om het  
de eer te geven, waar het recht op heeft.  
Zendt mij met spoed bericht, als ge het vindt."

Acht kilometer maakt een lange weg,  
als je hem reist met droefheid in je hart.  
God van de sterren, Heerser van 't heelal,  
vergisten wij ons? Wijs ons dan terecht!

Hun hoofden zijn gebogen in gebed  
en rond hen staat de schoonheid van de nacht,  
zilver en blauw . . . de diepe stilte wordt  
nauwelijks gebroken door der dieren tred.

Tot, met een juichkreet als een donderslag,  
zij worden opgeschrikt uit hun verdriet:  
"O wonder, dáár is weer de Koningsster!" —  
en voor hun ogen gloort een nieuwe dag.

Zing, zing mijn hart, in mateloze vreugd!  
Vergeet voorgoed het kwaad, dat achter ligt:  
hier is het teken van de Vredevoorst,  
in wie reeds Daniël zich heeft verheugd.

Majestueus rijst boven hen de ster,  
zo stralend, als de wereld nimmer zag . . .  
God, die de hemelen in aanzijn riep,  
dank, dat ons deze gids maakte er haar thuis!

En als op vleugels haasten zij zich voort  
naar 't witte stadje aan de horizon,  
— Bethlehem Efratha, edel met recht! —  
waar de prins woont van het profetenwoord.

De ster staat stil . . . heeft Hij zó'n nederig huis?  
Maar in het gouden licht, dat het omglaanst,  
wordt het een kleinood, waarbij elk paleis  
verbleekt: God's liefde maakte er haar thuis.

Hun handen beven, in verwachting groot,  
als zij eerbiedig kloppen aan de deur  
en binnengaan . . . daar, vriendelijk groetend, zit  
een jonge vrouw, een Kindje op haar schoot.

Geen vragen wellen naar hun lippen meer,  
geen woorden zijn er op dit ogenblik,  
zij weten: Hij is de beloofde vorst . . .  
en knielen in aanbidding voor Hem neer.

Wacht nu, Herodes, in je web van haat,  
want deze prins ontsnapt je wreed komplot!  
Zie, wierook, goud en mirre schenkt men Hem,  
waarmee Hij straks je koud gebied verlaat.

Innig verwonderd blikt Maria neer  
op dit tafereel en etst het het in haar hart,  
terwijl de vrede van een hemels rijk  
de magiërs bindt aan hun gevonden Heer.

Wijsheid der eeuwen, die God's kleine Zoon  
haar hulle brengt: zij worden als een kind .  
en engelen treden nader om met zorg  
hun duurst geschenk te dragen voor Zijn troon.

Tini Van Ameyde.

## "Wie het Kind gezien heeft, heeft de Vader gezien"

De wereld wil heus wel een Vader in de hemel hebben.  
Heeft niet ieder sterveling bescherming en bewaring nodig?  
Het leven biedt zoveel risico's, dat het dwaasheid zou zijn  
om brutoweg een Vader in de hemel, die de narigheden  
opvangt en de schade dekt, opzij te schuiven. Werkelijk,  
een Vader in de hemel kan het gebroken mensenleven best  
gebruiken. In de grond van de zaak hunkert elk menskind  
naar zo'n Vader. De rijke in zijn weelde wil hem wel er-  
kennen en de arme in zijn naaktheid wil wel bij hem schuilen.

Alleen, dan wordt er één ding van die Vader verwacht.  
Dan moet zo'n Vader "acte de presence" geven. Dan moet  
Hij zijn aanwezigheid laten merken. Er moeten "Vader-  
bewijzen" in het leven zijn.

Anders heb je aan zo'n Vader niets. Als Hij zich stil  
houdt, als Hij niets doet, dan kan je beter niet in hem  
geloven. Dan is het dwaas om op zo'n Vader te vertrouwen.  
Dan komt de knagende gedachte: Zou Hij wel bestaan?  
Of de radicale conclusie: er is geen God.

Daar heb je het probleem van duizenden mensen, zowel  
van ongelovigen als van heel wat Christenen. Werkelijk, ze  
zijn niet afkerig van een Vader in de hemel, maar ze be-  
grijpen niet, dat Hij zich zelf niet legitimeert.

Natuurlijk zijn er traditionele vromen, die dit probleem  
niet kennen. Voor hen behoort de Vader vanzelfsprekend  
tot hun geestelijke inventaris. Ze passen automatisch hemelse  
Vaderzorg en wijze Vaderleiding aan bij elke levenssituatie.  
Ze doen het met grote gelatenheid en diepe berusting. Soms  
hanteren ze de Vaderidee te gemakkelijk. Dan is dat geen  
resultaat van harde innerlijke strijd. Maar dan lopen ze  
ook kans om die Vaderidee te verliezen, als hun leven plotse-  
ling op een heel erg pijnlijke wijze geteisterd wordt.

Daarom is het wel goed, als het "zich stil houden" van  
God een probleem in het leven is. De psalmisten en profeten  
in de Bijbel hebben het gekend als een innerlijk conflict.  
De dichter van Psalm 42 heeft erover geklaagd, dat zijn  
vijanden hem tartend vroegen: Waar is nu je God? Asaf  
heeft het uitgeschreeuwd in Psalm 83: "God, houdt U niet  
stil". En Jesaja laat Israël klagen: "Mijn weg is voor de  
Here verborgen, en mijn recht gaat van mijn God voorbij".  
En er was ook een discipel, Filippus, die tegen Jezus zei:  
"Heer, toon ons de Vader en het is ons genoeg". Deze discipel  
wilde ook bijzondere werken des Vaders, misschien wel een  
teken uit de hemel zien.

Want nog eens, een Vader moet zich manifesteren. Hij  
moet in deze wereld zich keren tegen alles, wat slecht en  
gemeen is. We moeten hem herkennen in het tegenhouden  
van rampen en het afwenden van gevaren. Een Vader ge-  
neest je als je ziek bent en een Vader legt brood op je  
tafel. Wat heb je aan een Vader, die de halve wereld ver-  
honger laten en die geen oorlogen verhinderen kan.

Maar ineens houden we op met onze kritiek. Ineens leggen  
we de hand op de mond.

Want we worden gebracht bij de kribbe van Bethlehem.  
En daar verstaan we: Wie het Kind gezien heeft, heeft de  
Vader gezien. Jezus gaf dat als antwoord aan Filippus: "Wie  
Mij gezien heeft, heeft de Vader gezien". Dat was al direct  
waar in de Kerstnacht. In het nieuw geboren Kind leren  
we de Vader als Vader kennen.

In dit Kind heeft de Vader al onze critiek beantwoord en  
al onze eisen ingewilligd. Want als Hij zich gaat keren tegen  
alles wat slecht en gemeen is in deze wereld (en allereerst  
in ons eigen leven), dan doet Hij het in dit Kind. In dit  
Kind verzoent Hij de wereld met zich zelf en verandert Hij  
de vloek in een zegen. Er mogen nog zoveel rampen en  
honger in de wereld zijn, dit Kind brengt Vader's veiligheid  
en Vader's brood aan zondaren. En dit Kind brengt een nieuw  
leven en een nieuwe wereld. Er is geen machtiger Vader-  
bewijs dan de komst van dit Kind. De Vader heeft zich  
gelegitimeerd en "acte de presence" gegeven. Hij deed het  
in de kribbe van Bethlehem.

Dat is wat we op de Kerstdag moeten zien. Dat moeten we  
dóór hebben.

Dat "zien" is niet zo gemakkelijk. Het is niet een uiterlijk,  
maar een innerlijk zien. Het is een "gelovig" zien.

Als God de wereld redden en genezen gaat, dan openbaart  
Hij zich niet in krachtprestaties, die opzien baren. Hij slaat  
niet Keizer Augustus neer en Hij verspert niet Herodes de  
weg. De oorlogen, die aan de gang waren gedurende de  
Kerstnacht gingen door.

God deed het anders. Hij kwam bij de mensen op voet  
van gelijkheid. Hij ontledigde zich zelf en verbond het  
leven van Zijn Kind aan ons ellendig leven, opdat dit ellendig  
leven — te beginnen bij de wortel ervan — zou worden  
genezen en geheiligd en bewaard. Dat is een veel radicaler  
verlossing dan een incidenteel drastisch ingrijpen in een of  
andere hoek van het wereldgebeuren. Dat is veel sterker  
krachtsdaad dan wij God willen voorschrijven. Want dat  
is een daad van onbegrijpelijke, zelfverloochenende liefde.  
Het is ook veel doeltreffender en in zijn uitkomst veel ge-  
weldiger en totaler en absoluter.

Maar het is niet opvallend. Het begint met een Kindje,  
dat in een kribbe ligt, heel simpel en heel gewoon. Er zijn  
natuurlijk een vader en een moeder bij en er staan nog wat  
belangstellenden om heen. Dat is al.

Wanneer zullen we eens ophouden met oppervlakkig te  
zijn? Soms trappelen we van ongeduld als er geen machtige  
Vaderbewijzen in ons leven zijn. Het grootste Vaderbewijs  
is, dat God "incognito" bij ons kwam wonen. Hij zond  
Zijn Zoon in ons bedelaarskleed naar ons zondarskruis. Wie  
het Kind gezien heeft, heeft de Vader gezien. Je moet het  
alleen maar "zien".

Maar als we het "gezien" hebben, dan verandert ons  
leven.

Dan ontvangen we door dit Kind niet alleen Vader's  
verzoening, maar dan weten we, dat Hij met dit Kind ons  
alle dingen schenken zal. Ook verlossing, óók bescherming,  
ook genezing, ook brood. En nog veel meer. Want dan is  
dit Kind de Bron van een nieuw mensenleven in de meest  
brede zin van het woord. Dan herschept dit Kind alle levens-  
verhoudingen en wordt het de Wortel van een nieuwe mensen-  
maatschappij, de Hersteller van Vader's wereld.

En wij, wij "zien" dan niet alleen wat we door dit Kind  
ontvangen, maar ook wat we door dit Kind mogen en moeten  
doen. We gaan uit de kracht van dit Kind de Vader "zien"  
en "zoeken" en "gehoorzamen" op alle terreinen van het  
brede leven.

Want wie dit Kind gezien heeft, heeft niet alleen de Vader  
in zijn liefde gezien, maar leert Hem ook zien in zijn  
sovereiniteit en in zijn rechten.

H. Van Andel.

## OPROEP

Allen die bekend zijn met 't hui-  
dige adres of de verblijfplaats van  
NEIL (KEES) SANDERSON, geb.  
1 juni 1943, worden vriendelijk  
verzocht dit door te geven aan  
zijn vader, de heer J. C. Sanderson,  
Bredaseweg 61, Chaam, N.Br., The  
Netherlands, of aan het Reformed  
Church Office, 428 Main St. W.,  
Hamilton, Ont.

Neil kwam onder het Young  
Farmers Plan in 1963 naar Cana-  
da. Zijn ouders hebben in lange  
tijd niets van hem vernomen en  
zijn erg ongerust. Neil is deze  
zomer eerst gesignaleerd in Win-  
nipeg en later in Lethbridge en  
het vermoeden bestaat dat hij er-  
gens in West Canada vertoeft.

**Hartelijk dank** aan al onze clientèle voor  
het vertrouwen in ons gesteld gedurende het  
afgelopen jaar.

Wij wensen al onze familie, vrienden  
en kennissen een Gezegend Kerstfeest  
en God's hulp in 1966 toe.

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INGEZONDEN

**HET KERSTNUMMER VAN CHURCH AND NATION**

Gaarne maken we van de welwillendheid van de redactie van Calvinist-Contact gebruik om U iets te vertellen van het Kerstnummer van Church and Nation. Zoals U waarschijnlijk wel weet bedoelt dit blad de zaak van "Reformed Faith and Action" te bevorderen met name in de Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, zoals die tot meerdere ontwikkeling zijn gekomen na de tweede wereldoorlog. Dit betekent niet dat ons blad waardeloos zou zijn voor hen die niet kerkelijk behoren tot de Christian Reformed Church. Vanzelfsprekend is veel van wat in dit blad geboden wordt, ook van betekenis voor hen die behoren tot andere Reformed of Presbyterian churches. De zaak van ons reformed faith is breder dan die van enige reformed church. Gelukkig maar.

Het is echter zo, dat de redactie van Church and Nation van oordeel is, dat velen die ons blad thans nog niet lezen, er wel bij zouden varen als ook zij regelmatig van zijn inhoud kennis namen.

Neem bijvoorbeeld het Kerstnummer. Dit begint met een prachtige illustratie van William Hart; een plaat, die naar het gevoel van de redactie niet alleen artistiek, maar ook "reformed" verantwoord is. In zijn artikel "Lord of Lords" legt Mr. Hart verder zijn bedoeling met deze illustratie uit. Een ander hoofdartikel bespreekt het nog altijd verwarrende punt van de rechte Kerstfeestviering. Dr. Praamsma vestigt de aandacht op de huidige ontwikkelingsgang in de United Church, Dr. Woudstra spreekt als Oud-Testamenticus over het belangrijke vraagstuk van het gebruik van het Oude in het Nieuwe Testament. Dr. L. T. Schalkwijk begint zijn beoordeling van een kinderbijbel in tien delen, die aan de man gebracht wordt door de Zevendedags Ad-

## Onder Millioenen

Als gij in een spelonk aan 't uiterste der aarde Uw handschrift, tussen vele, bij verrassing vinden zoudt En dan het simpel werk dat eens Uw hand vervaarde In blij herkennen voor Uw ogen houdt Dan is het wonder daar — dat — waar 't zich ook bevond — En 't zij de tand des tijds 't verwoestend werk begon Ja tijd noch afstand het verhind'ren kon Of d' ouderdom de letters en de tekens deed verbleken — G' uit duizenden Uw eigen schrift hervond.

Zo kent U God, waar gij U ook bevinde Zijn geest gaat altijd voor U uit Gij kunt U spoeden als een hinde Hij jaagt U als Zijn buit. — 't Zij d' ouderdom 't verwoestend werk aan U begon Of 's leven's leed Uw glorie en Uw vreugde deed verbleken (Uw oog daarvan een zeker teken) — Gij zijt Zijn schrift: Dwars door de aangerichte schade Door 't leven aan U toegebracht Door tijd noch afstand te verhind'ren Herkent Hij Zijn gedoopte kind'ren Als een gekneusde ziel Hem tegenlacht.

Jelle Veenstra.

Verder zijn er de bekende rubrieken van Kerknieuws, verzorgd door Dr. G. J. Hoytema en Perschoon onder leiding van Dr. L. Praamsma.

De geschiedenis van een kerk of groep van kerken wordt mede bepaald door het blad dat voorlichting geeft. Voorbeelden zijn gemakkelijk te geven. Daarom is Church and Nation van zo grote betekenis voor vele lezers van Calvinist-Contact. Als redactie zijn we blij met de groeiende waardering voor ons blad. Maar het zou zoveel gemakkelijker gaan als het aantal abonnees nog wat toenam.

Het adres van onze Circulation manager is: Mr. P. Speelman, 10 Golfdown Drive, Rexdale, Ont.

Dank U, redactie van Calvinist-Contact, weer heel hartelijk voor deze plaatsruimte.

Redactie  
 CHURCH AND NATION.

## VAN DE REDACTIE

Tot onze spijt bleef er in dit speciale Kerstnummer van ons blad geen ruimte meer over voor een aflevering van het feuilleton "Niemand is alleen". De voortzetting zult U nu vinden in het komende Nieuwjaarsnummer, dat tussen Kerstmis en Nieuwjaar gepost zal worden.

Voor dit nummer ligt ook gereed de eerste van een serie van drie "Open brieven", door Rev. H. Van Andel geschreven aan Rev. K. Hart naar aanleiding van diens "Brief aan een ARSS'er" in "De Wachter".

Nog een andere interessante brief ontvingen wij ter publicatie. Deze werd geschreven door een officier van de Nederl. Koopvaardij aan Rev. H. Uittenbosch, de bekende evangelisatie predikant, speciaal belast met de zorg voor zeelieden.

Deze en andere bijdragen zullen ook het volgende nummer van ons blad weer zeer lezenswaard maken. Helpt U mee om het aantal abonnees te doen groeien? Bij voorbaat dank!

Redactie "Calvinist-Contact".

## DIT GEBEURDE ALLEMAAL OP KERSTMIS

Op Kerstmis werd Karel de Grote tot keizer gekroond (In het jaar 800)

Op de 2e kerstdag 1853 werd New York door een geweldige brand geteisterd

Kerstavond 1247 werd de romantische roofterder Robin Hood om het leven gebracht

2e Kerstdag 1780 ontstond er in London een oproer dat door meer dan 100.000 soldaten moest worden onderdrukt

Met Kerstmis 1959 stond Fidel Castro vlak voor zijn overwinning op Cuba

Kerstmis 1862 begon Jules Verne aan zijn roman

1818 werd voor het eerst het kerstlied „Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht“ gezongen (in Oberndorf, Oostenrijk)

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Heen:

Rotterdam — 9 mei 1966 met de "Rijndam" van de H.A.L.

Terug:

Montreal — 1 september of 24 september 1966 eveneens met de "Rijndam".

Ook verzorgen wij deskundig alle individuele vlieg- en bootreizen.

Vrijblijvende inlichtingen ook over de financiering worden U of Uw ouders gaarne verstrekt door het

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## Thank You

to all and everyone, printers and customers alike, who have helped to make the first edition of the "Guide to Good Books" an overwhelming success.

**We wish you many Blessings at Christmas-time and throughout 1966**

Gerald and Mrs. Denbok

**P.S.**

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HI NEIGHBOURS!

Martin Luther loved music. As a boy he sang in the church as payment for his lodging at the choir school, in Eisenach, for Martin Luther was poor, so poor that he also sang in the street to collect coins to buy food.

The masters of the school were very proud of their musical student and, when Martin went on to the University and won the highest honors, they were delighted. Martin Luther loved the Bible. He translated it into the language of his people and became one of the greatest leaders and preachers in all the world by telling its beloved stories.

Because he was so musical, music played a large part in his services of worship. He wrote hymns for the people to sing, and loved to hear the strong stirring melodies ringing through the church. And because he loved little children he wrote a beautiful poem for his own little children — one that children everywhere still love to sing at Christmas — "Away in a manger."

In France on a long-ago Christmas Eve, a procession of monks gathered under the stars. They were going to midnight mass in their little church to worship the coming of the Christ Child. To them it was the most blessed night of all the year.

As the little procession went slowly over the rugged hillside, tall brown-robed Brother John began to sing the Latin hymn "O, come, all ye faithful; and the monks joined in for that beautiful carol in that clear, starry night as flickering torches shone on the snow, echoing the holy joyousness in their hearts. No one knows who wrote the words. Long, long ago, even before this procession of monks, perhaps someone in Italy or in Portugal wrote it. Christmas-loving worshipping people have handed it down; ever since — until now, it is a favorite carol all over the world.

Centuries ago in England it was the custom on Christmas Eve for people to gather in the streets to sing carols. The people of little villages did it. So did those in the big cities. Everyone sang — for Christmas was a joyous time. One clear shining Christmas Eve such a group was standing around the flickering street lights, caroling "The First Noel" and others, printed on sheets which had been distributed.

"What will we sing next?" asked the song-leader. And a chorus of voices shouted "God rest ye merry gentlemen", for that was their favorite.

As the words of this old, old carol were sung, one little boy asked his father, "Who wrote this song, Dad?" But his father did not know. No one knew then, and no one knows now. But it was written long, long ago. Perhaps by just such a street caroler. It is still much-loved all over the world.

According to the Bible story three kings set out on a night some time before Christmas to pay homage to a newborn King. Being kings and accustomed to receiving homage themselves they took to this new King precious gifts. The story has come down through the ages and because it is part of the greatest story in history, an American pastor, the Rev. J. H. Hopkins wrote a Christmas carol that tells in simple language and beautiful music the story of the journey of the Three Kings. This carol too has come down through the years. In churches it is frequently sung while being dramatically enacted.

Long ago there lived a king in Bohemia named Wenceslas. He was a very good king, he loved the people of his land, and he ruled them with kindness and wisdom. The people loved him for they appreciated his many deeds of kindness, such as hastening himself to them, or to send help no matter how stormy the weather, when his subjects were ill or in need.

At Christmas time the good King Wenceslas celebrated the coming of the Christ Child and saw to it that every church and cottage in his land specially marked the Christmas season.

As in other countries the people of his land sang carols at Christmas. And because they loved their good King, so one of his subjects — no one knows who, wrote a Christmas carol in his honor. All about his kindness to others. This carol — "Good King Wenceslas," has been handed from generation to generation and from country to country.

Phillip Brooks was a great American preacher of the 19th century. He was famous through the country, and people hurried from far and near to hear his sermons. He was also a man with one big wish . . . to see Bethlehem, where the Christ Child was born.

One Christmas Eve his dearest wish came true. He climbed the moonlit hills of Palestine and looked down on the village of Bethlehem nestling at his feet. Back

home in America he sat at his desk on another Christmas Eve. As he thought of the beautiful stillness and wonder that had filled his heart that Christmas in the Holy Land, a poem came to his mind. He wrote it, and hurried to his church to see if the organist could compose a melody. How nice, he thought, if the children could sing it in the church. Next morning, Christmas Day, they did. Clear, sweet, children's voices sang: "O little town of Bethlehem," as Philip Brooks joyously listened, perhaps never dreaming that his beautiful carol one day would be sung the whole world over.

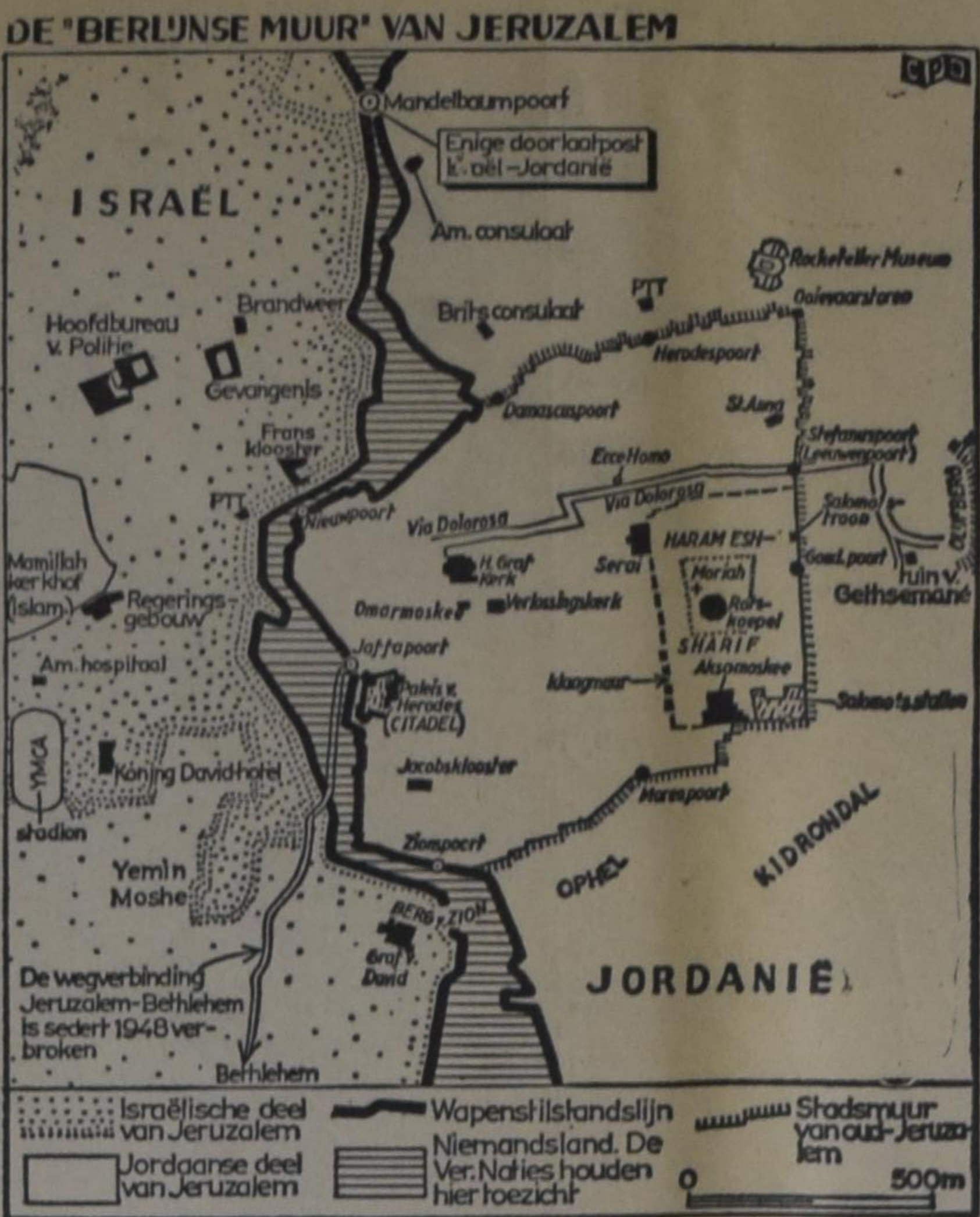
These are but a few stories of origins of our well-known Christmas carols, but as we sing them we are not aware that a great deal of personal history may have gone into the writing of them. They are dear to many of us, and yet each year we discover that modern song is replacing the loved ones, which somehow belong to the spiritually-minded Christmas worshippers.

It always bothers me when I hear "White Christmas" called a Carol. To me it represents the worldly conception of Christmas. New songs are written every year for the world, and many of them lose their popularity after one season. "White Christmas" is one of the few that have remained over a period of time. I hope Christians will never lose their love for the songs of the season which tell the real meaning of the day. It is so easy to go along with the latest thing, and then the old may become outmoded. Let us hope this may never be the case with people who still believe and to whom this day is a glorious reminder that "for our sake He became poor." We are the richest people in the world with this truth in our hearts, expressed in our songs, and lived in our lives.

The Silent Night is not only sung for sentimental reasons but we experience a stillness that only peace with God in our hearts can bring.

May you all have a very joyous Christmas season.

YOUR NEIGHBOUR



**DE GESPLETEN STAD JERUZALEM**

In de naam Jeruzalem huivert het verleden en schittert de toekomst. De heilige stad is echter thans in twee delen gesplitst die nog strenger van elkaar gescheiden zijn dan de "Berlijnse muur" in Berlijn dit daar vermogen te doen.

De strijd tussen de Arabische landen en Israël in 1949 scheurde Jeruzalem via een wapenstilstandslin in twee delen uiteen. Tussen beide delen in bleef een stuk niemandsland waar de Ver. Naties toezicht hebben. Het grootste deel van Jeruzalem kwam bij Israël en het kleinste deel bij Jordanië. Dit kleinste — en tevens oudste — deel van Jeruzalem was reeds lang voor onze jaartelling de hoofdstad van Israël maar het kreeg in de loop der historie talrijke vreemde heersers. Jeruzalem wemelt van de heilige plaatsen. Van de 36 heilige plaatsen staan er 34 in het Jordaanse deel en 2 in het Israëlische deel.

Totaal telt Jeruzalem ruim 200.000 inwoners waarvan ongeveer 170.000 in het Israëlische deel wonen. In het Niemandsland wonen duizenden mensen w.o. een zeer groot aantal vluchtelingen uit de oorlog in 1949. Het is bijna een misdaad om van het ene deel van de stad naar het andere deel te willen en er is dan ook slechts één doorlaatpost tussen de beide delen, de Mandelbaumpoort. Hier mogen b.v. toeristen vanuit Jordanië Israël binnen maar niet laat ze daar Jordanië niet meer in! Alleen met Kerstmis en soms met Pasen zet men de poort voor pelgrims open en zwijgt voor een moment de haat. Voor de rest van het jaar heeft Jeruzalem opgehouden te bestaan als één stad.

In het westen is het minder bekend dat Jeruzalem voor de Islam de tweede heilige stad is, na Mekka. Voor hen steeg Mohammed ten hemel in de Haram esh Sharif. De Aksa-moskee is een van de belangrijkste heiligdommen van de Islam.



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De huizen zijn versierd met bonte kleuren,  
Men roept om broederschap: wij horen bij elkaar!

Maar Heer, laat ons toch zien de voosheid van  
ons streven,  
De ijdelheid van vlijt en werk en goed,  
Zolang niet al ons lieven, loven, leven,  
Als offers zijn gelegd aan Christus' voet.

Help ons opnieuw als kind'ren blij te wezen,  
Steek Zelf het Licht in onze donkert' aan!  
En doe ons bij dat Licht gelovig lezen  
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"... an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Rise! Take the Baby and His mother and escape to Egypt.'  
—Matthew 2:13

"The true Light, that illumines every person was coming into the world . . . He came to His own and His own did not receive Him.  
—John 1:9, 11

## THE CALL OF LOVE

The text above this drawing is not complete. Matthew had said more than that Joseph had but to flee to Egypt. In verse 15 we read, "so that the Lord's word through the prophet became fulfilled, Out of Egypt I called My Son."

Apparently these words refer to the prophecy of Hosea (11:1) "When Israel was young, how I loved him and called him from Egypt to be My son. But the more I called to them, the more they deserted Me, offering sacrifices to the Baals and burning incense to idols."

Without trying to find a theological explanation, it is obvious that we meet very difficult texts here, whether you take the passage from Hosea or Matthew.

Jesus had to be brought to Egypt as a refugee "so that the Word of the Lord became fulfilled," a tirade we often meet in Matthew's message. Things have to happen *because* the word of the Lord has to be fulfilled. Not the other way around. The Lord's word is not just a prediction, not only a future-telling. When the Lord speaks, things *must* happen in order to fulfill that which the Lord has spoken.

Hosea had to speak very humanly about God. "How I loved him and called him out of Egypt." You see, this Father could not be without His child any longer. His love was so strong that He called him out of the bondage of Egypt. God was deeply moved. Hosea had to use such plain words, that we would not misunderstand the meaning. "How I loved him!" This Father could not see the slavery of His child any longer. He wanted His son to be all His, in freedom and in happiness.

But . . .

"But the more I called to them, the more they deserted Me," Hosea had to say.

Let us be sincere now, and admit it; the more He called us, the more we deserted Him. Who is God to us? Is He really everything? And are we to Him what He may expect of us?

Don't say now that you cannot understand the drawing, which the artist, Chris Stoffel Overvoorde, has drawn for our paper. Don't you see the struggle to bring *this* out? Who can bring to expression that which moved God to send His Son to Egypt, — into the house of bondage? There is where He went. Into our bondage, in order to be called from Egypt, from this house of bondage.

Take a little distance from the drawing and see how Joseph with Mary and the Baby leave the dark world. He had come to His own, but His own received Him not. They did not understand why He came, and neither do we, nor does the world. Therefore He had to go into the very centre of our bondage, into Egypt, in order that God may call again.

He took our place. Yes, for God had called us, "How I loved him and called him." It started already in Eden. "Adam, where art thou." And the call did not silence. Where are you, my people? Where are you? I want you to exchange love with Me!

However, "the more I called them, the more they deserted Me." We all, people of the twentieth century just the same as the Israelites, did not respond to the call of God. Yet His love could not be without an answer. Genuine love cannot be without a response. It must resound, or it will die. But, praise God, His love can never die. Therefore, Joseph, Rise! You're forced to do so. Take the Baby and His mother and escape to Egypt. His own received Him not, but My love requires and deserves an answer, for God so loved the world, that Joseph had to take the Baby to Egypt, in order that God's call may be heard and answered again. How an artist ever dared to express this in a drawing . . . Chris Stoffel Overvoorde did it, and we thank him for it. The flight to Egypt is such an overwhelming expression of the love of God; for that reason already it must impress us deeply and lastingly.

See them go . . . so that the Lord's word became fulfilled. See them go to the place, our place, where He could answer the love of His Father, our Father.

Out of the depth . . . out of the bondage and chains of the curse . . . out of Egypt I called My Son.

For God sent His Son into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

D.F.







## QUO VADIS, CHARLES?

Of all the diplomats in the world, France's president Charles De Gaulle is today (Monday, Dec. 6) no doubt the most frustrated and furious. The thing that he held unthinkable has happened: he was defeated in the general elections that were held Sunday, December 5. Today the whole world wonders: what next, De Gaulle?

The answer to that question may be quite a while in coming, but when it comes it will have far reaching consequences.

To be sure, not all is lost for De Gaulle. According to the newspaper reports he received 44% of the votes, considerably less than he had figured on.

Under the French constitution, which De Gaulle himself forced on to the nation seven years ago, the president needs a majority of over 50%. If no one gets a clear majority, a new election is to be held between the two candidates who received the most votes.

The man who is next in popularity in France turned out to be Francois Mitterand, leader of the socialist party, who also received the support of the French communists. Constitutionally a new election must be held on Sunday, December 19 with president De Gaulle and Francois Mitterand as the only contenders.

There is little doubt which of the two will win and if things were as simple as they look on the surface De Gaulle would certainly still be France's next president. The trouble in our world is that things never are as simple as they look on the surface.

To begin with, at this moment, and possibly for several days, the world will wonder what De Gaulle's reaction will be to his defeat. There are those who think that De Gaulle cannot swallow his pride to the extent that he will allow the public a second chance to re-elect him.

If this is so (and the characteristics he has shown in the past certainly bear it out) the "great" Frenchman who wants to restore France's grandeur, merely proves that as yet he does not understand or know true greatness, which is born of humility alone and of the sacrifice of pride.

And if Charles insists upon being nothing but a proud little Charley then there are only two courses open to him now. He may withdraw his name from the list of candidates and leave the field open for the two next contenders, which would be Mr. Mitterand with his 32% of the votes and M. Jean Lecanuet, a catholic middleman, who received 16% of the votes and presumably stole them from De Gaulle.

Then again, De Gaulle may wish to give one of his followers a chance to win the election by resigning as president and handing over the reigns of the country to his favourite, if a donating mind such as his knows any favourites at all.

Only a few weeks ago De Gaulle felt absolutely certain of his victory in this election. So did almost everyone else in France as well as abroad.

So sure was De Gaulle of himself that he felt free to issue statements which were almost outright insults to the voters. "Without me France will collapse," he said. His election campaign over he ordered classical music to be played during the hours the state radio and T.V. stations allowed the candidates to solicit votes.

Those words must have struck curious response in the hearts of all Frenchmen. He might just as well have used the words of that other French ruler: L'état, c'est moi. — The state, that's me!

He was of course referring to the fact that it was Charles De Gaulle who rescued his country from utter chaos only seven years ago.

Charles De Gaulle has always regarded it as his special mission to restore France to the position of grandeur it once held in the world. His chance came in 1958. At that time the country was on the brink of economic and political collapse and an armed revolution seemed imminent.

All the economic aid of the United States had failed to restore France's economy. The bickering politicians in the National Assembly seemed to be there only to overthrow one government after another. The communists were gaining influence hand over fist. The military, as well as the general public, were very unhappy about France's decline which became evident in the defeats it suffered in Indo-China, in the Suez crisis, and, not in the least, in the policy towards Algeria. For a while it seemed that violence could be the only outcome of the chaos. And that was the situation which seemed tailor-made for De Gaulle.

Instead of offering his services, however, he made it plain that he wanted to be asked to take matters in hand. In an isolated castle De Gaulle continued writing his memoirs, seemingly indifferent to the fate of his country.

Of course, when enough pressure was brought to bear upon him he graciously consented to play the role of saviour — on his own terms. Those terms included a referendum that changed the constitution and gave him sweeping powers, which he promptly used to sweep his political opponents under the rug. Ever since De Gaulle seemed invincible. And that's why he felt he could freely insult the voters: "If you don't re-elect me, you will collapse."

Now it appears that the man of whom it was said: "The main trouble with him is that he is usually right," has for once made a serious mistake. The five other candidates attacked him fiercely. "If France must collapse without De Gaulle, he must have done a very poor job during his seven years as president," one of them remarked. The point was not lost on the voters.

Others pointed out that De Gaulle with his obstruction of the European Common Market, has seriously hurt the French economy and must be expected to continue doing just that if he were re-elected. That point wasn't lost on the voters either.

Then the public opinion polls showed a definite decline of De Gaulle's popularity. The great Charles felt obliged to re-open his campaign with a t.v. and radio-speech. He even mumbled some surprise remarks about maybe admitting Great Britain to the Common Market.

It was too little and too late. A large number of the voters switched to the catholic Leganuet, who some regard as "the French Kennedy," he is so young and exuberant.

When this appears in print we are presumably on the eve of new French elections. Whoever the contestants may be in this election, it seems certain that things will never again be what they were during De Gaulle's period from 1958 to 1965.

Even if De Gaulle "submits" to the humiliation of a new election, and even if he then wins this new election, he will have to give serious consideration to the winds of change that are blowing in France at the peril of being blown away by them.

If he prefers not to suffer humiliation and someone else should take over the presidency it is almost certain to usher in a new era in Europe.

JOHN VRIESINGA

## Let's Play Chess

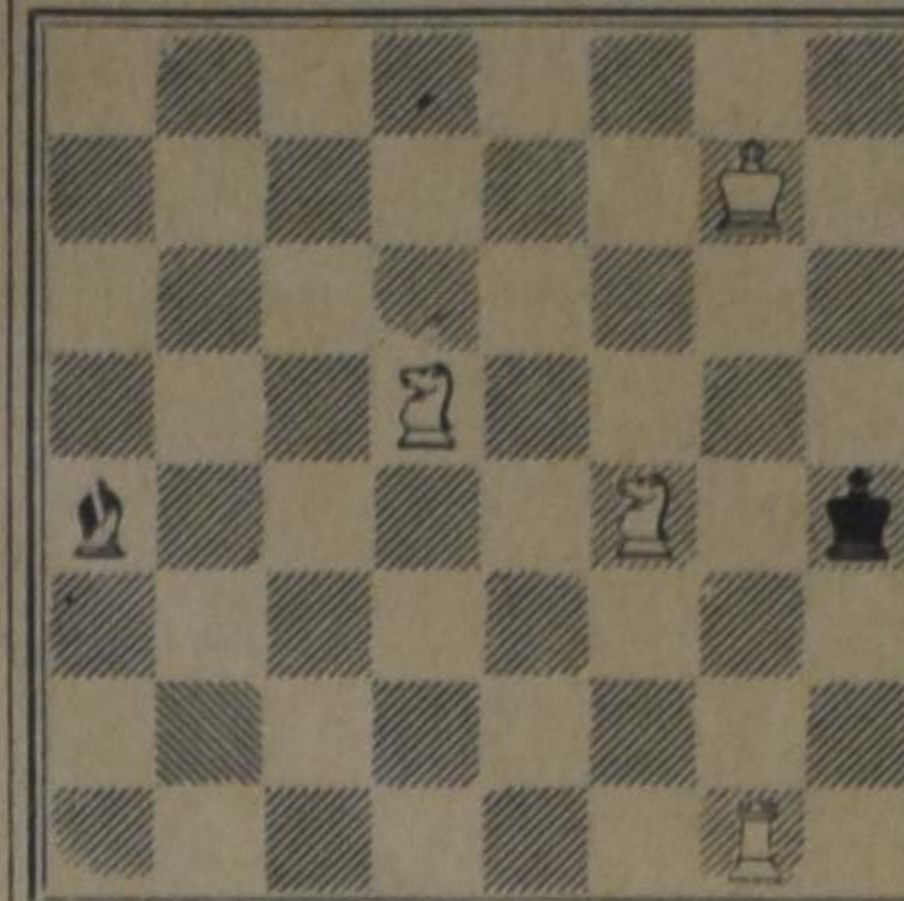
Editor: Mr. C. HESS

### SECOND SERIES OF PROBLEMS IN DECEMBER

No. 186

Author: W. Massmann

Black: 2 pieces



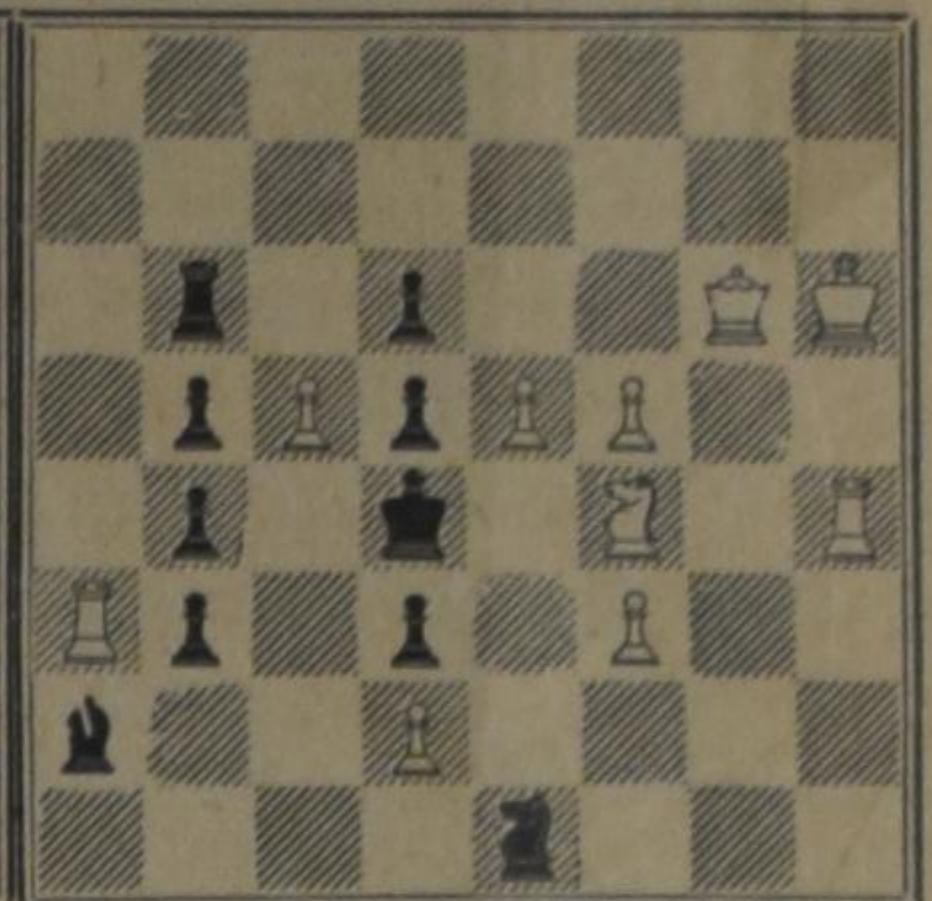
White: 4 pieces

White to play and mate in three moves. 3 points

No. 187

Author: A. P. Eerkes

Black: 10 pieces



White: 10 pieces

White to play and mate in two moves. 2 points

#### NOTES:

1. As a surprise in the last month of the year I offer two hard nuts to be cracked. In any circumstance a two-mover should be solved, but I wonder whether right solutions of the three-mover will be sent in . . .
2. No. 186 belongs to the so-called miniatures. It is really smart to make such a deep problem out of so few pieces. The full solution, of course, should be sent in.

3. No. 187 is difficult because the black King is not locked in at all. Several things should be done at the same time in this case. Key-move and threat (or is it a tempo problem?) are sufficient.
4. Solutions should be addressed to the editor personally on or before the 20th of Jan. 1966 (postmarked). People living outside of Ontario have 5 days more.

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# Season's



# Greetings

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# THE WORLD OF BOOKS



**THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS**, by Alan Cole. Tyndale Bible Commentaries, New Testament Series vol. 9. Published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. Reviewed by Rev. J. G. Groen.

Numerous Young People, Ladies and Men Societies have sighed already: wished there were some Bible commentary in the English language like the Dutch 'Korte Verklaring'. I cannot quite say: Here it is; but I must say that these Tyndale Bible Commentaries are about as close to the 'Korte Verklaring' as any. Now mind you, by this comparison I do not mean to say that this Dutch work is the best you can have. I only use it as a work we know and can compare others to.

When I pick up a new commentary, I look to an answer to three general questions. The first is: how does the author regard the Bible; as the living and infallible Word of God or not? Then I look up some rather difficult passages in that particular Bible book to see which explanation is given. And finally I consider whether this is a book that can be easily understood, also by people who had no higher education. So I'll make a brief remark about these three points of interest.

Yes, this commentary on Galatians is Biblical. Alan Cole does not rule over God's Word but tries to understand and listen. No man is perfect in this task of listening to what the Lord says, but the honest effort is there all the time.

And what about the explanation of hard passages? Take e.g. a keystone passage like Gal. 3:15-18. A sound explanation is given which immediately brings out that Cole understands the main message of this Epistle. The promise of salvation which is a gift of Jehovah cannot be attained by works of the law which came 430 years later.

Then follows the famous passage about the purpose of the law in the O.T. The author explains this purpose as: protective custody; but he makes sure not to leave the impression that he regards the law as a grim captor. And so he circumscribes the word which in the Dutch New Trans-

lation is given as 'tuchtmeester' with 'the trusty, elderly slave who conducted his young master to and from school'.

Proper attention is given also to that hard expression 'the rudiments of the world' as it occurs in 4:3,9. In his paraphrase he translates it with 'the ABC of the Universe' which I don't think is clear and strong enough. But in his explanation he supplies enough information about this hard expression to enable the reader to make up his mind.

And then, in conclusion, an answer to the question: Does this commentary on Galatians make easy reading for 'Laymen, teachers and ministers'. The flap of the book indicates that these comprise the intended audience.

The 'laymen' will be helped most by the paraphrase which Mr. Cole gives of each passage before he goes into it more deeply. In the explanation which then follows, the original Greek words are used often which does not make it impossible for untrained readers; yet the road to full understanding becomes somewhat hobbly, which is discouraging to our Young People and other Societies.

Reading the Bible itself and reading it again is, of course, the first requirement for every man. We make ourselves dependent upon commentaries when we don't earnestly read a complete passage or epistle and when we don't compare one passage to another. But having done all that, we know that the Holy Spirit leads other people also to understanding God's Word. And this commentary of Alan Cole helps so that we "may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge".

**50 SYMBOLS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH**, published by the National Union of Christian Schools. \$2.25 (\$1.50 to member societies). Reviewed by John Knight.

The National Union of Christian Schools has published a set of designs inspired by fifty Christian symbols. Each of these is printed on heavy coloured stock and the set is accompanied by a booklet describing the symbols.

The art work in this series was done by Edgar Boeve, art instructor at Calvin College — and an accomplished artist whose work is usually characterized by a bold design. Boeve, who seeks to convey to a twentieth-century world has always used a great deal of symbolism in his work and this assignment is "right up his alley".

To present a gallery of symbols is not new. There are a number of books on the market, including inexpensive paperbacks that present symbols used in Christian art throughout the centuries. Quite often, as can be expected, these are published by the Roman-Catholic Church.

In order to appreciate religious painting a knowledge of these symbols will be very helpful and the educational value makes it a "must" for every school. The booklet that explains each design refers us to many scripture passages.

Within the scope of this booklet it was not possible to give a historical review of these symbols; for instance how during the early centuries Christian symbols were a source of comfort for persecuted Christians. Perhaps many symbols have lost their significance to us, twentieth-century Christians. We look for more dynamic means, it doesn't "excite" us to see a symbol because we, as Calvinists, have not been exposed to symbolism like the Eastern Orthodox or Roman-Catholics have.

Since each design is printed in only one colour, Boeve's rendering sometimes looks drab. To an artist who is bold in his use of colour this restriction is no doubt a handicap. Perhaps this is why, despite their educational value, the symbols in this series lack the life, luster and vibrancy we expect to find in Christian symbolism. It could be that the technique to work in flat, decorative surfaces was a poor choice; only the artist is to judge. The printing is excellent, each design has a wide margin and the appearance of the set (in a transparent plastic envelope) makes for an attractive package. It lends itself well to classroom use.

One thing that disturbs me in this, and other works on Christian symbols, is that several of the designs look pagan rather than Christian. Since they are historically correct, perhaps the fault lies in history, perhaps, as hinted before, we are no longer perceptive to the symbolism of centuries ago. I believe that a modern attempt to portray the four gospel writers for instance, stressing the difference in content and their portrayal of Christ. To a man like Boeve this, I presume, would be a real challenge.



We welcome the glad Christmas season and all the heartfelt joys it brings.

We welcome, too, the opportunity to pause in the midst of our daily occupations to recall anew how fortunate we are to have the favors and friendship of our valued customers. To all of you, we offer our real appreciation and our best wishes for your holiday enjoyment.

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## Gleanings from the Press

## FROM HITHER AND YON

### A RAGGED DOLL: A TATTERED PAST . . .

She sat on the steps leading to the Bethany children's cottage. Pensive and still, she tightly clutched her ragged doll. She looked at the tiny doll very affectionately. It seemed her only friend.

The bruised and battered doll was 9 year-old Linda's only possession when she arrived at the cottage last week with a Bethany caseworker. Now the doll appeared to be her only link with a shattered past; a past that more recently had known a full measure of fear, loneliness, and heartache.

Linda had arrived that day with tears in her eyes. Tears which sprang from a little heart, crushed and broken in a home which now knew no love. Although her parents formerly attended church, their's was no longer a Christian home. It was broken. Empty. A home which a deserted mother could no longer hold together amid the collision of continuous crises. As I watched this little tot on the steps, my mind wandered and I thought of the hundreds of youngsters who during the past 20 years had preceded Linda to Bethany. I thought of the hundreds who had been placed in Christian foster homes . . . and of those who were able to return to their homes and families. I reflected on the 794 babies which Bethany had placed into adoptive homes throughout the land.

I thought of all these precious jewels and of how God in His providence had used Bethany as a powerful and wonderful influence in their lives. Suddenly there flashed in my mind that beautiful picture which all of us have seen often since childhood — a picture of the Master sitting alongside

the road, with boys and girls on His lap and in His arms. And who can forget His kind exhortation, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Before walking on, I looked once more at little Linda. She seemed to be smiling now at her new housemother. It was hard for me to leave. My only regret was that all of Bethany's friends everywhere who have been supporting this work with their gifts and prayers could not have shared this moment with me. Here, somehow, God seemed so real . . . and the Kingdom of Heaven so near.

—From a folder of  
Bethany Christian Home.

\*

### DUTCH CHRISTMAS

The young Dutchman looked embarrassed. "Oh, come on," all of us were saying, "we know you like Canada all right or else you wouldn't still be here after four years. But there must be some things you don't like. Just give us one instance. There must be something you would like to see done differently in Canada."

Convinced that we were in earnest and really wanted his honest opinion, the young Dutchman, who was talking part in a panel discussion on community relations, said all right there was something he would change if he could.

"I would change your Canadian celebration of Christmas," he declared. Then he grinned. "I guess I'd better leave now, eh?" "No!" the rest of us chorused. "Tell us, please. We're not too happy about our Canadian Christmas either."

Santa Claus is Out

"I think our Dutch Christmas

is better," he said hesitantly. "Here in Canada you have a little man you call Santa Claus and your Christmas is all built around him." And he went on to tell us that in Holland the giving of gifts has no part in Christmas, which is marked as a religious festival only.

The giving of gifts is observed earlier, on December 5, which is St. Nicholas' Day, so that when Christmas comes along the commercial part is all over and, while Hollanders usually have a gaily decorated tree in their homes, the actual celebration is religious in nature.

In Holland on Dec. 5 gifts are given to the children and the adults also exchange presents. The emphasis with the older people is more on fun than on money, though. The gifts are usually small ones and are hidden all over the house with written clues as to the hiding place being placed under the plates at the breakfast table.

Everyone has a lot of fun searching for gifts from the attic to the cellar. Writing funny little rhymes to each other is another charming tradition of St. Nicholas' Day. "But," he pointed out, "it all has nothing to do with Christmas."

\$ Sign or Star in the East  
We found ourselves very much in agreement with the young Dutchman. For there is no doubt about it that our Christmas has deteriorated from its original religious significance to an orgy of commercialism in which Santa Claus and the \$ sign have crowded out the Three Wise Men and the star in the east.

There is something almost nauseating in the emphasis on expensive gifts. "For the man who has everything," a pre-Christmas advertisement reads, "An 18-karat gold shaving bowl. Only \$1,200." And a friend writes me about seeing a table of "Christmas gift suggestions" in a Seattle store



which included mink bedroom slippers being "rationed out," she adds ironically, at "a hundred bucks per."

There is something that nauseates me, too, about the way a jewelry manufacturing outfit has taken a verse from the Bible, "if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed . . . nothing shall be impossible unto you," and incorporated it into an advertisement for "amulet of faith" necklaces, bracelets and earrings. The jewelry features "this tiny genuine mustard seed," the ad goes on, which "will be a beacon light to guide you always . . . through Faith." A dollar each. Ugh!

"Keep your Dutch Christmas" we all urged the young Hollander. But that was not possible, he said sadly. "We are in Canada now and our children want to do things the way their little Canadian friends do." But it seems to me we Canadians could learn something from the Dutch celebration of Christmas.

—The Vancouver Sun.

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# A CHRISTMAS STORY BY INEKE PARLEVLIET

It was snowing heavily. A thick curtain of falling snow barred the view to the stables and barns behind the old farm house. The wind whistled around the corners of the buildings, swept the snow high up and blew it into loose piles against every obstacle which was in its way.

The morning was there, but the sun didn't have a chance to break through. The sky was low and lead-grey. Much more snow and wind was to come, yet.

The farmhouse was dark, except for the large kitchen. There it was light and cozy. The roaring fire in the black belly of the stove spread a comfortable warmth through the room. A savoury smell of fried eggs and bacon mingled with that of freshly made coffee. Around the heavy oak table sat the Millner family. Mrs. Millner was helping 2-year-old Debbie with her porridge. A bright cone of light from the ceiling lamp shone on Mrs. Millner's smooth blond hair and made it look like gold. Eight-year-old David, who sat opposite her, thought how sweet and kind she was. So different than Dad was lately. Dad . . . David looked at him, but his father was mainly hidden behind the morning paper. Only a tussle of his dark hair was visible. Once in a while he stretched out a hand from behind the paper to get some food from his plate, but for the rest he seemed to use the morning paper as a separation between himself and the others. As if he doesn't belong to us anymore, David thought. Doesn't want to belong . . .

"Come David, daydreamer, hurry on with your breakfast, and you too, Allen," Mrs. Millner said. "It's already eight o'clock. The weather looks bad and it's quite a walk to school."

She got up, walked to the window and peered outside. "That's a horrible blizzard," she said, going to the door. Carefully she opened it, but a sudden gust of wind blew some snow right into the kitchen. A cold draft made Mr. Millner look up.

"Close that door," he growled.

"I just wanted to see how bad the weather was," Mrs. Millner said almost apologizing. Her voice was soft and kind. "It's really a terrible blizzard and I wondered . . .", she hesitated for a moment as if she wasn't sure whether or not she would go on. Then quickly she added: "Couldn't you bring the boys to school with the truck, Max?" It wouldn't take you too long and you have snow tires."

"Drive the kids to school just because of a bit of snow!"; Max Millner said. "I wouldn't dream of it. Why can't they walk? There isn't anything wrong with their legs, is there?"

"But it's so cold, too . . . and all the way they'll have that wind against . . ." Mrs. Millner's voice was pleading now.

David and Allen didn't look up. They went on eating and pretended not to hear the conversation, but they heard every word and were afraid. Dad had been in a bad mood from the moment he got up this morning and by experience they knew that one wrong word from them or Mom could cause a burst of anger by Dad.

Dad gave a short, cynical laugh. "You're worried because they have to walk 20 minutes to school in a snow storm?", he said. "You're making sissies out of them, Helen! When I was young, my father didn't have a car waiting in the driveway for me! Regardless of the weather I had to walk and not 20 minutes but almost a full hour. And I can tell you that these winters aren't half as bad as the ones we used to have. Why do you think I've always been so healthy and strong and vigorous? Because my parents packed me in cotton balls?" The lines in his weather-beaten face deepened and an angry frown bridged between his eyes.

Mrs. Millner did not reply. She knew it was no use and she was sorry that she had started this conversation. She had picked the wrong moment. She should have known that.

But Dad wouldn't stop anymore now. He was working up a real temper like he had had several times these last months.

"I wish I had two of those sturdy, strong legs like the boys! Then I would show them something! By George, I would! But I'm disabled, incomplete! Good for the Old Folk's Home . . ." Stumbling he got up and pushed the table away with his big, strong hands. It made a screeching noise on the tiled floor. He stood up straight now. His tall, muscular body towering over his wife and children; his face red and twisted. He put out his right leg and patted it with the flat of his hand.

"Lovely leg, isn't it? So sturdy, so firm! And that without one bone, one muscle! All wood, beautiful solid wood! It'll last a life time, for sure!"

His voice was hoarse and he was almost screaming. Then with a few awkward steps he walked to the door, opened it roughly and disappeared in the dim morning. The wind banged the door behind him. A deep silence fell. Even Debbie had stopped playing with her porridge. Mrs. Millner leaned against the counter. She trembled all over. Allen looked frightened and David started to cry softly.

The next moment Mrs. Millner pulled herself together. "I have to think about the children," she told herself. She turned and went to David and Allen.

"Don't cry, my boys," she said as casually as she could, putting an arm around their shoulders. "Daddy will be all right again."

"Won't he always be like this . . .?", David asked, still sobbing. Mrs. Millner stroked his hair. He was such a sensitive, serious little boy.

"No, David, no. I'm sure that one day Dad will be again as he was before that terrible accident with the combine. I don't know when. But God will help him. He can work miracles."

"You mean He will give Daddy his own leg back?", Allen asked, who was only six. His mother smiled fondly.

"I don't mean that, Allen. Of course, God could do that, too, but don't you think that it would be a much greater miracle if He made Daddy happy and cheerful again like he used to be? Even with only one leg?"

The boys nodded silently. That would be the greatest miracle of all, David thought. It was hard to believe that Dad would ever be different again. He had changed so much . . . He didn't seem like the same Daddy anymore. Before the accident all the boys at school had always envied Dave because of his Dad. There was no man in the whole county who could hunt and swim and fish like his Dad. He had always been the most admired hockey player when he was younger and even today he was still the most courageous fireman of the village. Dad had taken him and Allen camping, on hikes, on fishing trips and hunts. And not only the two of them, but many of their friends as well. Dad had taught them to swim, to dive, to play hockey as it should be done, and to make camp fires, tie knots and hundreds of other things. He had always been their great



friend. Now he often didn't even notice them. He didn't care anymore if they got good marks at school or if they won a prize on field day. He was always moody. He never sang anymore and never joked or told them adventurous stories at night. He either got angry very fast over nothing or he was so depressed and quiet that he didn't say ten words a day. No, it seemed to be impossible that one day Daddy would be happy and gay again. David wondered whether God really could perform such a miracle.

"We have to pray for Daddy," David heard Mom say. "More than ever before he needs our prayers and our love now. I know how you feel about him, you not only feel disappointed and hurt, but you don't like Daddy as much anymore. Isn't this true, David?"

David nodded ashamed. How did Mom know? He often had bad thoughts about his father and if he wasn't so afraid of his ill temper at times, he would like to tell Dad off.

"You still have to love him, David. We all do. How else could we pray for him? The Lord Jesus says that it isn't difficult to love someone who is nice and kind to us. But we should also love people who are angry with us and who don't like us at all. Daddy still loves us all. I'm sure about that, children. But he cannot accept the loss of his leg, that's why he's often so harsh and unkind. He's very unhappy himself. Try to put up with his bad moods and go on loving him. He needs our love so badly. Have patience and pray for Daddy. Every day, every time you pray. One day God will hear us if we keep on praying and then all will be well again. Perhaps even better than before."

"I'll pray for him . . . and I will try to love him always . . ." David said.

"I, too, Mom," Allen said.

"My big, brave boy. How I love you!" Mom said. Then she looked at the clock above the stove. "Twenty past eight!"

## The Miracle

You'll be way too late for school! Hurry! I'll write a note for the teacher, explaining. Finish your breakfast fast!"

Shortly after David and Allen left the house, warmly dressed with a scarf over their face and mouth. The wind was biting cold and the tiny snowflakes prickled like sharp needles in their faces. They struggled along in the deep snow over the lonely country road, their backs bent against the storm. Often their boots sank away in a treacherous pile of snow, but they went on, without talking. It was already hard enough to breathe with the scarf over their mouths and the cutting wind against them.

Mrs. Millner watched them until they were out of sight.

"Please, God, take care of them," she prayed silently. "They're still so young. It's so hard for them to understand. And help Max. He is so lonely. He wants to fight it all himself. Please, let him realize, God, that he needs You . . ."

For a moment Mrs. Millner debated if she should go and see her husband. Then she shook her head. Better not. She couldn't help him in his struggle. He wanted to do it all himself and he had to, too. His faith had never been very strong. Up till that fatal morning last August his life had been rather easy. He had always been healthy, full of energy and a hard worker. Except for a few poor years he had fared very well on the farm. Max had always felt that he owed this mainly to himself. After all, he worked his head off, didn't he? He didn't drink, didn't smoke, lived soberly and as much as possible outdoors. So why shouldn't he be healthy and strong? People admired him, envied him, and they all called for his help when there was some trouble. A mad bull, a run-away horse or a lost child. It didn't matter what. Big Max could do everything, knew everything and would do everything. That's how it had always been until he was picked up, unconscious, from under the combine. It was a wonder that he was still alive. But instead of being grateful that God had saved his life, Max cursed Him for making him a cripple, an outcast, as he called himself.

Mrs. Millner sighed. Then her eyes fell on Debbie who, unperturbed, was smearing the rest of her porridge over her face and chair. "Debbie!", she shouted, "you naughty, little girl!" But when she had cleaned her up, she kissed her cheeks. She just couldn't be angry with Debbie. She was too glad that at least Debbie could still be happy.

Max Millner had gone to the stable. He shivered in his woollen sweater. Was it ever cold! But the stable was warm, and the smell of the cows and pigs familiar and comforting. He walked to the box at the end of the cow barn, where Brownie was waiting him. Heavily and quietly she waited until he had come close by. With her big eyes she gazed at him with infinite patience and submission. Max took her head between his hand.

"Only a few more weeks, Brownie," he told her. "Then you'll have your baby — a beautiful little, healthy calf. All yours and we're going to keep her for you. David may take care of it. I promised him long ago. He will give her the best care in the world and find a nice name for her."

After his outburst in the house Mr. Millner now felt as if all life had been drained from his body. He felt limp and empty and also ashamed. Sometimes it seemed as if the devil was taking hold of him, a devil that overpowered him with such a sudden attack that he had no defence, no control

of it. This devil was destroying him and on his turn he was destroying the ones he loved most. He knew it, yet he was not able to stop it. But it's not my fault, he thought with bitterness. It's God's. Why did He let me lose my leg? Why did He disturb our happiness? We were happy until He interfered.

"Yes, it's all Your fault!", he suddenly cried aloud. "You wanted to make me feel small, You wanted to break me. Well, You're doing it, but You aren't just ruining me, but my whole family. It's Your responsibility, not mine. If You really loved us, You would never have brought this upon me . . ."

The storm outside raged on. Through the little window Max saw two small children battling with the wind. His boys . . . Allen had his hands buried deeply in his pockets, but David was holding them folded on his back. The way I taught him to skate against the wind, last year, Max thought. I should've brought them to school with the truck . . . I still could do so . . . But he didn't. Instead he fell down on a milking stool and with his head buried in his hands, he cried like a child.

Christmas was coming soon. Only a few more days and the holidays would start. Yet David and Allen were not as excited about the coming holidays and Christmas as other years. Last year Dad had made a hockey rink for them behind the big barn, sheltered from the North wind. He had taken them ice fishing and a couple of times he had come along when they went tobogganing at Forest Hill. Once even Mom and little Debbie had come for a short time . . .

Christmas Day itself had been wonderful. They had had a beautiful tree and Mom had been baking for days, but the nicest thing had been that early breakfast with burning candles and Mom reading the Christmas story. They had all gone to church and everybody had been so happy. Dad had been singing for them when later in the day the Christmas tree had been lighted. He had such a deep, warm voice. It all went through you, David thought. But it was long ago that Dad had been singing. Or laughing. He didn't have those fits of temper anymore the last few weeks, but he was very quiet and withdrawn. He hardly ever talked at table and often he ate all by himself. Most of the time he spent in the barn and stables, even at night. He refused to have visitors and he didn't go anywhere himself either. Not even to church. The family were having a ride now with Mr. Warren. Mom didn't say much about it. She remained kind and did everything for Dad she could. Yet she was unhappy and often her eyes were filled with tears when she thought nobody looked at her. The other day she had really cried. That was when Dad had taken all his hunting and fishing trophies and had thrown them into the hot stove. Nobody had dared to say a word. Those beautiful golden and silver trophies which meant so much to Dad . . .

"Do you think Dad will get us a christmas tree again, Dave?", Allen asked on the way to school.

David shrugged his shoulders. "I don't think so and Mom doesn't want us to ask him. I don't care so much anymore about a tree. What's the use if Dad is so . . . so quiet and sad. He seems to have forgotten all about us."

"It's just like we have no father at all anymore . . .", Allen said. His mouth quivered.

"But you still have me," David said helplessly, putting his arm around Allen. "And Mom and Debbie . . ." But when he said it he knew it wasn't enough. What they needed and wanted was their father. Both boys fell quiet. There was no more to say.

Mr. Bergman, the teacher of grade 3, let his eyes dwell over his class. The children were sitting with their arms folded, waiting for the Bible story.

"Three more days and we all will have christmas holidays," Mr. Bergman began, and then three more days and we're having Christmas. That's why today I like to start telling you the Christmas story."

The faces of the children brightened.

"Now, who can tell me why the Lord Jesus was born?", Mr. Bergman asked. Thirty-two hands went up high.

"Rose Walden?"

"Because He wanted to forgive us our sins," Rose said proudly.

"Right, Rose. Now another question. Was that easy for the Lord to do?" This time only five hands were raised.

"Yes, you John."

"No, it wasn't easy at all. He had to die on the cross for it."

"Very good, John. The Lord had to suffer terribly for it. So much that He was eventually so afraid that He pleaded God not to let it happen to Him. But He added right away: Only Thy will must be done, Father. And as we know Jesus died for us and was raised from the dead again. Now another question: God loved Jesus, His only Son, very much. Yet He wanted Him to suffer and to die for us. Why? What was God's reason for doing that, for sending His Son to earth as a little Baby? He knew it was going to be terrible for Jesus to become the Saviour. So why did He send Jesus to earth after all?"

This time the class remained silent. Then, hesitating, one hand went up.

"David Millner, you know it?"

"Because . . . because He loved us so much . . . ?" It sounded more like a question than an answer.

"Right! Right, David! That's the only answer there is. Because God loved us so much. I'm proud that you knew this answer. But do you all really understand how great God's love is for us? I'm afraid no one can understand that. I will try to explain this with a story. Listen."

"Once upon a time there was a great artist, a sculptor, a man who could make the most beautiful things out of marble and stone. Then, one day, this sculptor decided to make a sculpture so magnificent that people had never seen anything like that before. He knew he had the talents for it, but he also knew it would take much time, effort and energy. But that did not withhold him.

He searched for the most precious material and used the best tools he could find. Then he closed the doors of his workshop and started. No visitor was allowed, no interference was permitted. He worked for days and nights, for weeks and months. He slept on a hard bench in his workshop, he ate dry bread and drank only water. Yet he wasn't hungry, nor sleepy. All he wanted was to create something so beautiful that it would make everybody happy who saw it.

It took more than two years to finish the sculpture, but

(Continued on page 5)



when it was completed it was indeed the most beautiful thing people had ever seen. The artist had given it the name: LOVE. It was a sculpture of love, presenting a happy family. A father and mother and child and a dog, resting at the feet of the boy. They all had such happy faces and there was such a bond of love among them, that everyone who looked at it was filled with joy and kindness himself.

Immediately the sculpture and the artist were famous over all the world. Newspapers printed pictures and articles about them, television companies showed them both on every available channel and the sculptor's name was on everybody's lips. Although he was offered fabulous amounts of money for his master piece, the sculptor wouldn't sell it.

"I've grown to love it so much," he said, "that I could never part with it. Everybody may look at it, free of charge, but selling it? Never!"

And then, one night, something terrible happened. In the same city of the famous sculptor, lived another one. But his name was unknown and nobody had ever looked twice at what he had made, because it wasn't worth looking at. This man was green with jealousy when he heard how much praise and admiration the great artist received and it became even worse when he saw the sculpture LOVE himself. Never in his whole life could he make such a beautiful sculpture. He knew that. Instead of being thankful for the beauty which the artist had created, he started to hate him with all his heart. All he wanted was to hurt him, to destroy him. Soon he had made up his mind.

On a dark night he slipped into the building in which the sculpture stood. He was all alone, alone with the master piece. In a bag he had taken his tools and quickly with rough cuts he started to damage and deface the sculpture. He cut the arm off which the man had put around his wife; he changed the love in the eyes of the woman into anger, the kindness of the man into meanness and the happy laugh of the child into fear. He let the dog show a wide open mouth with sharp pointed teeth, ready to bite the boy. It was no longer a picture of LOVE anymore, but of HATE. It was ugly, frightening and it hardly resembled the sculpture as the artist had made it.

The next morning the sculptor saw what had happened. For a long time he stood speechless, shocked. Then he knew who had done this. Suddenly he was seized with an uncontrollable fury. His master work was spoiled, deformed, mutilated for ever. He could never, never restore it to its original beauty and love. The only thing he could do was to start all over again and to make a complete new one. But he didn't want that. He could not do that. He had had enough love to endure the two years of suffering and sacrifices to make this one, but now his love was gone. He was filled with hate, with anger, with bitterness. He took a great sledge-hammer and started to destroy the sculpture of LOVE. Hard blows fell faster and faster on the four figures carved in precious stone. Sweat was gushing down from the artist's forehead, his heart beating rapidly, his eyes blood-shot, but tireless he went on and on until there was nothing left of his master piece but small pieces of marble and a cloud of dust. But even this wasn't enough. The artist went to his own workshop and every tool he possessed, every hammer, chisel and carving blade he could find, he threw into a big fire until they had become crooked pieces of useless, burnt iron.

Only then did he stop. He would never make one sculpture again. He left the workshop and the city and nobody ever heard about him any more.

But in his small workshop the talentless sculptor laughed a devilish laugh. He had not only destroyed the sculpture LOVE, but its sculptor as well. HATE had triumphed over LOVE.

Mr. Bergman stopped. The children had listened spell bound, but now their faces looked puzzled. What did this strange story have to do with the Christmas story which the teacher was going to tell?

Mr. Bergman, however, didn't seem to pay much attention to the questions in their eyes.

"Can you understand why the great artist destroyed his master-piece?" he asked. All the children nodded vehemently. Yes, of course. What else could he have done? They would have done the same for sure . . .

"Now you like to know why I told you this story, wouldn't you? I'll tell you. This was just a made up story, but there is another story which resembles it a bit at the beginning. Also about a great Artist. The greatest of all. God. And that story you'll find on the very first page of the Bible. It is a real story. It happened for sure.

God had created everything: The sky and the moon and the sun and stars, the plants and flowers and birds and fishes and all other animals. Mountains and seas and lakes and tiny streams. And everything which He had made was perfect. At last He made man. Adam and Eve. They were His Master-piece. The crown of His Creation.

In the other story the sculptor had made things from precious stone, and of course the sculpture remained dead. There was no life in it. But God made everything from nothing and it all lived. The plants budded flowers, the birds sang and the cattle walked and ate. Yet only Adam and Eve could speak and only could they think and praise and love God. They loved God very much. He had made them so beautifully and so happy.

And then one day, God's enemy came. Satan. He hated God, because God was greater and mightier than he was. He told Eve not to listen to God, but to him. Why should she obey God? We all know what happened. She ate from the forbidden tree and Adam did the same. They had betrayed God's love by doing what Satan had wanted them to do. And now they were no longer people of Love, but people of sin, of Hate. They were no longer beautiful and perfect, but now they had become ugly and incomplete, because their hearts were full of evil. Satan had wanted to destroy God's master-piece, and he had succeeded. While the serpent slipped away, contended that Hate had triumphed over Love, as he thought, God came to look for Adam and Eve. And He knew what had happened. His enemy had deformed and spoiled His great and beautiful master-piece! And Adam and Eve themselves had given Satan the opportunity to do this! How terrible!

And what did God do now? Did He call His angels to kill Adam and Eve right away? Did He curse them? Did He tell them that they were no good and that He never wanted to have anything to do with them anymore? No.

God searched for them and punished them. They had to leave Paradise. They couldn't live anymore in such a perfect place while they had become sinners. But God didn't chase them away to leave them to their fate. He had compassion and pity for them and He said:

"Adam and Eve, in spite of what you have done I still

love you. Even now that you are ugly and deformed, bad and incomplete, I still love you and I will never stop loving you. And one day I will make you perfect again, I will give you and all other people who believe in Me, a new heart. I will send My only Son to pay for what you have done. He will fight Satan and conquer Him. Then I will make a new world. A world without sin, without Satan. It will be as perfect and beautiful again as it was in Paradise. And you will live in it and everybody else who loves Me. There will be no more evil and jealousy, sickness and sorrows, wars and pain. Only peace and happiness and love. Forever and ever."

God kept His promise. He gave His Son for all of us who believe in Him. The little Baby in the manger did not come to be admired and honoured by people or smiled upon by other children. He came to fight with Satan and He had to die on the cross for it. But He arose again from the death! And so Hate didn't triumph over Love, as Satan believed, but God's Love triumphed over Hate. That is Christmas. The feast of God's great Love . . .

For a while it remained silent in the class. This was a strange Christmas story. So different from the baby sleeping in the manger. Yet it was the same. Now they all understood why Mr. Bergman first had told the story about the famous sculptor. Now they started to understand a little bit how deep and how great God's love for them was. It made them feel warm and happy, but also very humble and small.

David had been listening intensively. He had forgotten that he was in the classroom. The first story had reminded him of his own home. He knew how hate and bitterness could destroy a happy family. For wasn't that what was happening in theirs? Then Mr. Bergman had told them about the new world which God would make for them. A world in which there was no more sin. But would there . . . would there be . . . ? He hesitated. Slowly his finger went up.

"Will . . . can . . . will my Dad get his own leg back . . . later on in the new world?" he asked, looking expectantly at Mr. Bergman.

Mr. Bergman did not answer right away. He looked at David with compassion. He knew a bit how things were at the Millner's home. He had seen David change from a happy, outgoing child to a sad, earnest boy who seemed to have a great burden to carry.

His voice was soft when he answered: "Of course David. Everybody will be complete again. Whole. Perfect. But it is not the most important thing, that there is no more sickness or injuries. There will be no more sin. That means much more. You see, to God we all are incomplete, disabled and deformed. Even when we do have two legs, or two arms, or can see and hear and walk and jump. In many ways, David, we all are crippled, blind, deaf and sick. Because of our sin. Yet God doesn't push away us because we are inferior. No, He holds us tightly so we can't fall and nothing will happen to us. Without God we can do nothing, David, not even if we are the healthiest and strongest person in the world. But with God we can do everything in spite of our weakness and sins. With God we can move mountains and plant them right into the sea. That's what Jesus tells us. Never forget that, David."

No, David didn't forget. During the days which passed his mind was still very occupied with what Mr. Bergman had told him that morning. He wished he could talk about it to his mother. Some things were still so difficult to understand. But Mom was so busy and her thoughts often seemed to trail away so far. Sometimes David wished that his Dad could have heard the story or that he could tell him about it. However, Dad went on his way. Somber and quiet he spent more and more time outside or in the stables with the cows.

"He's still fighting with God," Mom told David. "Leave him alone, but pray for him and love him. One day everything will be all right again. Really." But Mom hadn't sounded very convincingly when she said that.

David was shocked. Fighting with God? What did Mom mean by that? It must be something terrible . . . And more than ever David prayed for his father with all his heart.

It was the evening before Christmas. Mom had decorated the room with holly and red ribbons. David and Allen had painted pine-cones bright silver and gold. With red ribbon they were fastened to the garland of Christmas card across the room. It looked nice. Yet the room wasn't as beautiful as last year. And this wasn't only because there was no Christmas tree this time.

Dad had gone to the stable. "I'll have to stay with Brownie," he had said. "It looks as if she'll get her calf pretty soon. I'd better be there when it will be born."

That had been more than an hour ago. Twice Mom had gone to the stable to bring Dad some coffee and to ask if he needed any help. But he had said no. The calf wasn't born yet.

It was almost ten o'clock now. Allen had gone to bed. He had been too sleepy to stay up any longer, but Mom hadn't made any objection when David asked her if he might stay up until the calf was born. After all, it would be his.

"Please, Mom, may I go and see? It must have been born now for sure, if Dad doesn't want me around, I'll come right back. Okay? Please . . ."

"All right then," Mom said. The next moment David was gone, still struggling with his jacket when he left the house. The sky looked like it was made of black velvet, strewn with millions of sparkling diamonds. It was very quiet and peaceful. The light of the moon made the snow on the ground and trees colourful like crystals. There was no wind. The big cow stable stood a few hundred yards behind the house. Once outside David walked slowly. It was so beautiful around him. The brilliant star above the stable reminded him of the stable in which Jesus was born. Suddenly David wished that it was the same stable. Suppose he would find the Lord Jesus there . . . Then he could tell Him all about Dad. Now it seemed that the Lord Jesus didn't hear all his prayers, but what if he could ask Him personally? Even as a little baby the Lord Jesus could help, couldn't He?

At the same time David felt ashamed of his strange thoughts and quickly he opened the door and entered the stable. There in the far corner was Brownie's box. Dad was with her. The light threw his grotesque shadow on the wall behind him. Quietly David came nearer. His father didn't notice him. He was bent down over something on the floor. It was the calf! A shivering, light brown skinny animal with white patches all over. Brownie stood half over her. Her feet firmly planted beside the calf's head. Dad was trying to pull the calf away, but Brownie wouldn't let him. She mooed angrily and her flanks trembled with emotion. With force Dad tried it again.

"No!" screamed David. With a startle his father looked up. He released the grip around the calf's legs.

"What are you doing here, David? Go home."

"No," David said stubbornly, "I want to see the calf first . . . and you shouldn't pull it like that . . . you hurt it . . ."

"I don't want to hurt it, David, but I have to. That calf is no good. It's crippled and too weak to stand up. I have to kill it."

"No! No! You can't kill it Dad! You can't!" David cried. He knelt down and started to stroke the helpless animal.

"I have to, David. It's better off dead. It will never be a healthy, strong animal. May as well finish it off now. A crippled calf is no calf at all, I know."

"It doesn't matter that it is crippled . . .," David sobbed. "It lives. That's enough. I want it. I need it. I don't care whether it's lame or not. I love it just the same and I'll take care of her . . . I'll feed it, I'll keep it clean and Brownie loves it and Allen will love it. We don't care . . . bring it into the field when it can't walk. It's mine. You promised me! I won't let you kill it! I won't!"

Roughly David pushed his father away. He did it so unexpectedly that Mr. Millner lost his balance and they both tumbled down over the ground. David did not think about his father's leg, all his mind was occupied with the calf, the calf that he had to save. His father was not going to shoot it! Never! In a blind rage David let his fists come down on his father's back. All his anger and frustration about his father's attitude and behaviour of the last months had come to the surface and his small, but strong fists went on pounding and pounding.

"You're . . . not going . . . to . . . kill it . . .," David hissed "I'll . . . I'll . . . take care of that . . ."

David did not notice that his father did not move at all and that his face was strangely white. His hands trembled and he didn't say a word. He let David's blows come down without defending himself, without even trying to escape them. Then suddenly he made a noise that sounded like a held-in sob. It brought David back to his senses. It startled him. Dad was crying! Crying because he was fighting with him, because he had hurt him with his blows . . .

Abruptly he stopped. With shame he remembered what he had promised Mom. "I will try to love him always . . ." And instead of loving him he was fighting with his Dad, hurting him . . . He looked at his father. In the dim light he saw tears in his eyes and such a desperate expression on his face, that David forgot all about the calf.

"Dad! Dad! I didn't mean it! I didn't want to fight with you . . .," he cried, "I love you . . . I love you . . . oh, Dad, believe me, I love you . . ." He threw his arms around his father's neck and cried his heart out. Never before had he felt so miserable and ashamed as he did now. "I need you, Dad . . ." he sobbed. "We all need you . . . we all love you . . . we don't care about your leg. It doesn't matter . . . It doesn't matter . . ."

Max Millner held the crying child in his arms. "It's all right, Davy, all right," he said. "Calm down, my boy . . . You didn't hurt me . . . You don't understand. You helped me . . . Come, my boy, come, I love you, too." He stroke his hair and kissed him over and over again.

David finally became quiet. His face was red and tear stained. He buried it deeply in his father's sweater. He felt suddenly protected and safe and peaceful, and filled with love and compassion for his father.

"God will make you perfect again . . .," he whispered to him. "That's why the Lord Jesus was born. We are all crippled, the teacher said. Because of our sin. But God will make us perfect again. . . like Adam and Eve were in Paradise . . . The teacher told us a beautiful story about it. I've wanted to tell it to you, Dad, but you were never home . . ."

"Then tell it now, my boy. Tell it now. I'm ready to listen."

And then David told the story. Both stories. He couldn't tell it as well as Mr. Bergman, but his father was listening just as intently as David had been.

The calf had fallen asleep and Brownie watched her with big, moist eyes. She was no longer afraid to lose her precious baby.

Much later Mr. Millner and David left the stable. Hand in hand they slowly walked to the house. A bright, happy smile shone on David's face.

"Look, Dad," he said, turning his father around. "You see that big star above the stable?"

Mr. Millner looked up and nodded, "yes, I do."

"It has been there all the time, Dad. Before I went into the barn I hoped . . . I wished that this was the stable in which the Lord Jesus had been born . . ."

"Why, David?"

"Then I could have asked Him to help you . . . You see, we've all been praying so much for you, asking God to make you happy again . . . but it never seemed to help. I thought if I could ask the Lord Jesus myself, it would be better . . . Even as a baby He could have helped. And now . . . now it seems as if the Lord Jesus really was in the stable, Dad . . ."

Mr. Millner squeezed David's hand. "Yes, Dave, I know what you mean. And I think the Lord Jesus was really there Himself. He must have been there already for a long time. But I didn't know . . . I didn't want to see Him, I guess, because I was angry with Him and wanted to fight Him. But all the fighting did not help. It made it worse. I thought God wanted to hurt me and to destroy me when I got that accident and lost my leg. I didn't realize that I was destroying myself. I thought I was no good anymore because I only had one leg now. But you made me see when you started to fight for your calf that it doesn't matter at all if you have one or two legs. The love remains the same. Then you told me those stories and now I know I had it all wrong, David. I had it all mixed up. I loved myself and hated God. Now I know that God loves me and that I should hate myself for all my evil words and deeds. I want to be different, my boy . . . I really want to . . . God will help me now."

"Yes, Daddy. God will help you for sure. The teacher told us that without God we can do nothing, but with God we can do everything. Even plant mountains in the sea. Jesus Himself told us that in the Bible. But that I don't understand so well . . ."

"To plant mountains in the sea . . . ? I think it means the same as being happy with one leg, David . . ."

"Yes!" David cried. "Now I understand! It's just what Mom said! That's the greatest miracle of all! And it really happened . . . oh, I'm so happy!"

"And I'm too, my boy," Max Millner said softly. Then they turned around and walked quickly to the door, still hand in hand as two old friends.



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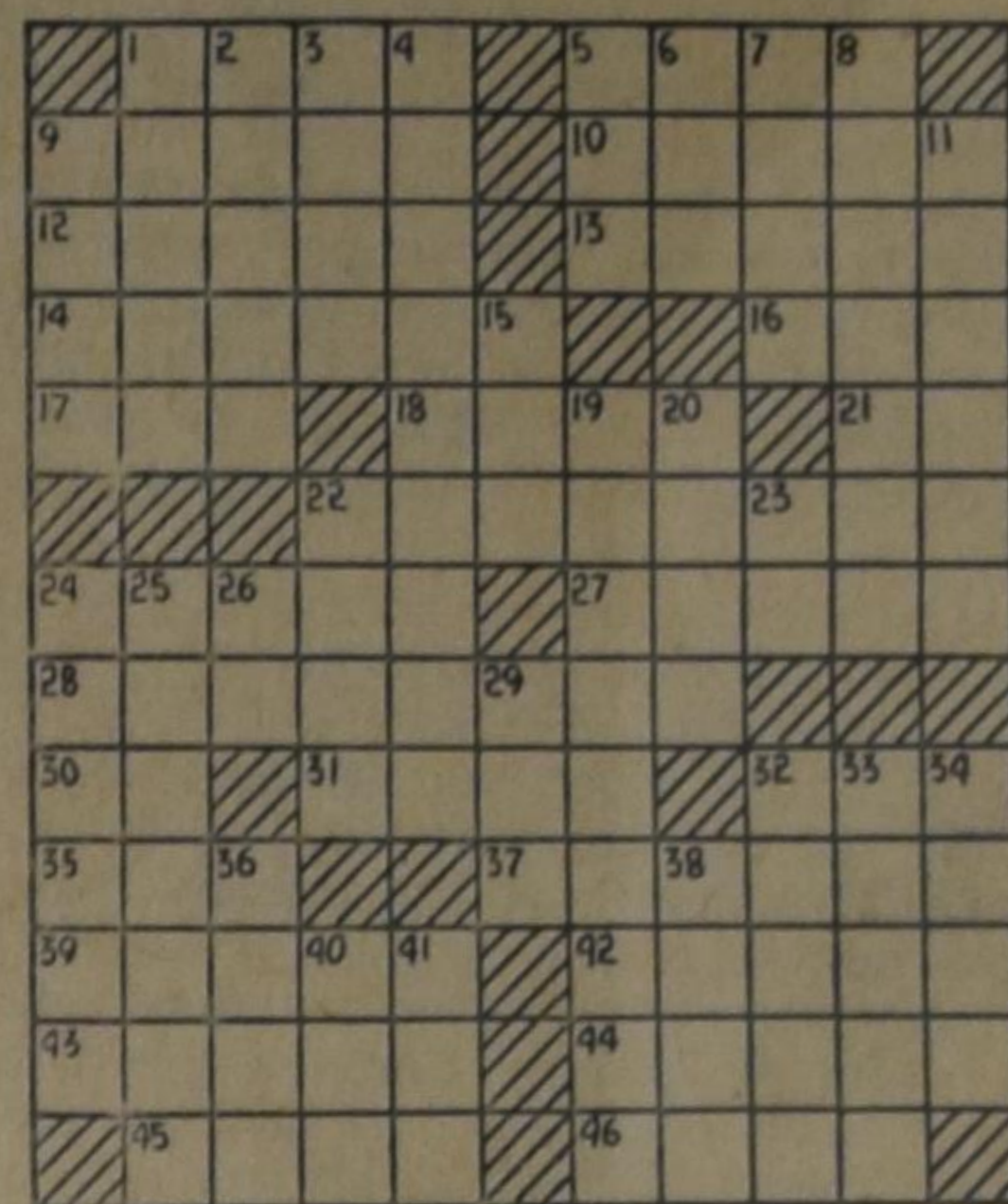
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Next week there will be no issue of our paper. Our forthcoming issue will be published between Christmas and New Year.

## CROSS WORD PUZZLE

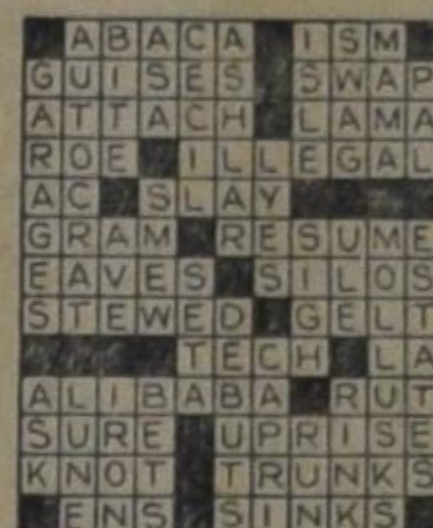
### ACROSS

1. Prophet
5. Jewish month
9. Mother-of-pearl
10. Proofreader's mark
12. Eng. psychologist
13. Anything worthless; slang
14. Animals
16. Than: Ger.
17. Baking chamber
18. Sloping roadway
21. Close to
22. Mountains: Asia
24. Nobleman
27. Swear
28. Retaliators
30. Depart
31. Son of Isaac
32. Malt beverage
35. Slope
37. Merchant of a play
39. Unburnt brick
42. Ear shell
43. Twilled cotton cloth
44. Ones
45. Lairs
46. Habitual drunkards
- DOWN
1. Auctions
2. Fame
3. Goddess of discord
4. Does guitar-repair job over
5. Division of a play
6. Women's group
7. Oratorio feature
8. Encores
9. Moses' death
11. Outer coats of seeds
15. Pants-stretcher, of a sort
19. Long-tailed, as the lobster
20. In addition
22. Sharp-en, as a razor
23. Land measure
24. Capital of Iraq
25. Shunned
26. Music note
29. Consume
32. Let in
33. Manor courts
34. Blunders



### Saturday's Answer

36. Certain card player
38. Italian river
40. Storage place
41. Printers' measures



**SOLUTION**  
to previous  
Cross Word Puzzle

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## Servant of Slaves

BY

GRACE IRWIN

(49)

"Considering the many extraordinary dangers that they (sailors) are particularly subject to in African voyages . . . I have proposed by the grace of God to set apart a day to humble myself before the Lord in their names, and by fasting and prayer to entreat His blessed will, that the lives of my whole company may be spared to return safe with me to England, or that such as His infinite wisdom shall see fit to dispose of otherwise may, by His grace, have a due sense of their sins and a comfortable hope of pardon through the merits of Jesus Christ afforded them, before they go hence and are no more seen."

And after the heart-searching consequent upon his discovery of the plot, he had been able to say that from "the first day of the voyage I have endeavoured to do my duty by them without oppression, ill language, or any abuse". He had also resolved to entertain no personal hatred or ill will against the offenders, but to pardon them freely as far as he himself was concerned. He would treat them with humanity while they remained in his power, but obviously could not encourage further attempts by passing such an affair over in silence.

Now on the deck below him excitement increased. Ignorant and regardless of what awaited them, the blacks, after the rolling horror of their month on the open sea, were regarding the nearing land with wild enthusiasm. Captain of the ship which had brought them unwilling from their native country, Newton looked down, with eyes in which the growing pity which he now felt for millions of his fellow-creatures obscured his satisfaction. Yet he had reason to feel satisfaction, for assiduous attention to cleanliness, purging their quarters with tobacco and sulphur after sickness, anointing them with beeswax and flossine oil, had brought them across the Middle Passage in as good condition as when they were purchased.

No . . . he hastily corrected his straying thoughts. It was the Lord's mercy and no good management on his part. An epidemic like the one which had broken out on the Argyle could have nullified all human effort. Poor wretches! He and they were both longing to set foot ashore, but with what different prospects! For him there would be ease, welcome, that for which he had been literally dreaming for months so that he often woke feeling them in his hands, many letters from his wife. For them, although increasing acquaintance with their life in Africa left him under no illusions as to its happiness, a far darker future.

The detachment was unfettered from the ring-bolts and marched, docile but still chattering, below deck. They must all be securely out of the way by the time the ship docked. Not that any attempt to escape could now meet with success; but men yearning for liberty were seldom prudent in reckoning risk of cost. The Captain did not blame them. In the several attempts at insurrection which had been betrayed or discovered, he had never felt anger with the leaders, though discouraged that the first

uprising had been planned by a young man so trusted that he had been left free of irons and in a position of some responsibility. The secrecy and near success with these repeated attempts were attended — on the first occasion every stantient of the barricado had been sawed through, and on another they had got possession of knives, stone shot, and a cold chisel — made rigid inquiry and punishment necessary. John was sorry for the slaves, but had no intention of proving inadequate to his charge, seeing his crew murdered or set adrift in an open boat, and leaving Mary a widow. It went, however, sorely against the grain for him to be a party to such a reversed standard of values that the leaders, who in any historical bid for freedom would have been accounted patriotic heroes, were to be punished and the informers prized, if not rewarded.

Both extracting information and punishing the guilty caused him great concern. At a social evening on a fellow-trader's ship, another captain had described with relish his discovery of an insurrection among the slaves and the pains he had taken to punish all concerned and to make the deaths of the ring-leaders as excruciating as possible. John had been appalled at the callousness which prided itself on such diabolical ingenuity. Yet the flogging, keel-hauling and other punishment for mutiny and less, to which English sailors were even then being subject, were only less fantastic in that they were part of an accepted routine.

But for him, a redeemed sinner, rejoicing in the pardon and mercy of God? Flogging he used, even with the crew, mainly as a deterrent. Irons meant nothing to those already in them. The thumbscrews, slightly applied and by his own relenting hand, had brought a mercifully swift and full confession. For the first time and for punishment alone he used the iron collars which some captains considered a regular item of the male slave's confinement. But the risk had driven him to another expedient: he had put the fourteen blacks principally concerned on board the Earl of Halifax, a large non-slaving ship, and had paid the Captain to deliver them to Mr. Manesty's agent in St. Christopher's; by which carefully calculated move too, he hoped to improve conditions for his overcrowded cargo. But it had been a wretched business, and even the calm of the ensuing months and the fact that the men slaves seemed entirely to have changed their temper, behaving more obligingly than his whites, only served to fill him with distaste at his office of gaoler.

"Gracious God," he prayed, by no means for the first time, "if it be in accordance with Thy wise will, deliver me from this necessity and fix me in a more humane calling. Until then, and as long as it is the line of life Thou dost allot to me, enable me to bear it as my cross with patience and thankfulness."

At least, his thoughts ran into another channel at the sight of a woman slave very near her time, at least while he was engaged in the traffic, he could check gross misconduct on the part of the sailors. Of course he could not be sure that William Correy's offence with this woman, the more brutish because of its garish publicity and her obvious condition, was the only one committed on board; but he had put the offender in irons for two weeks and had done his best to prevent further occurrences — another reason, doubtless, for dissatisfaction! In this regard crews preferred an easy-going captain. John had sufficient cause in

himself to know human weakness on this score. But from lawless and cruel rape in addition to their imprisonment he considered himself bound to protect the hapless woman in his charge. Looking to himself, lest he also be tempted, he had made a resolution which he had kept on both voyages that, as soon as he sighted a point of land where shore excursions and trading would provide illimitable temptation, he would abstain from all meat, and drink nothing stronger than water "to subdue every improper emotion". The emotions were not by this or other means altogether subdued. But by the grace of God operating with the fixed image of his wife in his heart, although desire surged in him strongly, his whole being recoiled from the idea of seeking satisfaction with anyone else.

His consequent abstinence was one of the many points on which the captains of other traders rallied him. During the periods of waiting on the coast it was customary for the captains to entertain on deck or in the cabin and while away the long dark of tropical evenings with cards, drink and conversation. To some, John's previous reputation was known. To all, his present habits were a source of wonder, if not amusement, though they found him no mean controversialist. He was ashamed to find himself surprised at times into indecent heats of arguments when the subject of religion was introduced, and found that the tongue, which was so slow to utter his heart in love, had to be curbed of its propensity to cutting retort. Still it did no harm — "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt" he quoted in extenuation — to have a salty answer to their personal comments on his philosophy.

"I think you have not the right notion of life, Mr. Newton," said one tough trader, dismayed at his determined sobriety.

"I'm sure you haven't. That makes us even," he had retorted equally.

"But what can you see in rambling about an island alone, man?" — this on an occasion when John had refused an invitation to a drinking bout, and spent a soul-satisfying evening in a retired walk around Bence Island — "You must be melancholy."

"To me a man who never wishes to be alone must be mad."

"Because you are married, you would deprive yourself of all pleasure. Why, I'd sooner be dead than such a slave to one woman."

"No, I don't deprive myself of any real happiness. And as for being a slave to one woman, some of you here, if I can judge by your conversation, are slaves to a hundred."

"Well, I wonder at your humour. I have no concept what you mean by happiness."

"I think the better of it on that account," John had retorted.

"Now what does he mean by that?" His latest inquisitor appealed to the company for enlightenment.

"I'll tell you," said John quite pleasantly. "As long as a drunken debauch, such as this is about to become, is your idea of happiness, and while you describe as a memorable pleasure your experience with prostitutes, I should dislike to think that you could form any notion of mine."

"Oh, give over trying to persuade him! A few years of married life will age him. He will realize then that pleasure is where you find it."

"And when I do you can tell me of it. But don't forget," said John as a Parthian shot, for the con-

versation had taken this turn because of his expressed intention to return early to his ship, "that whereas you have — evidently — never had my experience, I have had an ample taste of yours. However, if I say I pity you, you'll think me out of my wits. Yet so would some of the wretches in Bedlam who think their chains are golden ornaments. Good night."

"No letters?" It was unthinkable that a sailor should play a joke on his Captain, particularly the sober trustworthy individual who had been chosen for the great mission; yet John looked at him sharply, to postpone by suspicion the moment of acceptance. "You inquired at the right place? And there are no letters?"

Mr. Jonas, Manesty's agent, regretfully confirmed the flat negation. The stir and bustle of an unloading ship, details and discussion of market prices, inspection and calculation of slaves, orders and arrangements concerning the home-bound cargo of sugar and cotton: all these kept him moving, talking, listening like a man in a dream; but the walking man stood alone in a cheerless vacuum, every feeling suspended but numbing dread.

When by evening he had a few moments to himself, he went to his cabin and tried to think reasonably. There was a sharp pain in his head and he was reminded of its previous occurrence when, early in his voyage on the Argyle, he had been disappointed of an expected letter from Mary. It, or rather they, had arrived three months later after being transferred to six or seven different vessels, and from that happy issue he tried now to take comfort. In her last letter, written on July twelve and received by him at Shebar at the end of October, she had mentioned an earlier despatch, describing her journey home from Liverpool, which had gone astray en route from London to Africa. But letters were regularly arriving here from England. One from Manesty to Jonas bore as date the first of April. From the preceding twelfth of July Mary would have written to him many times and, allowing for the utmost in uncertainties of travel, several of those letters would have arrived at this permanent address — if she were alive.

This possibility, once crystallized in words, was like a cry in his heart. A messenger to the Seagull, a Snow, Bristol bound, was to call presently for his packet of letters; and he wrote a post-script to assure her of his safe arrival, keeping the expression of his state of mind by a heroic effort down to a mention of his disappointment.

At this point he glanced at Mary's portrait, staring at him from the wall with the bland, painted eyes so lacking in the lustre and expressiveness of the originals that he could scarcely believe the painter had looked at his sitter. Was this, for the future, all he would have of her to look at or talk of? He had described in one of his letters the visit to his cabin of Henry Tucker, his mulatto trader friend, the one man on the Guinea coast who had never deceived him. On this occasion he had been accompanied by the chief of his half-dozen wives, to whom Polly had sent the gift of a new gown. The first lady, greatly pleased, had promptly put it on over her inadequate native costume and shown off by parading in front of Mrs. Newton's picture. "I pay you no great compliment," he had written, "in preferring your picture to her reality."

(To be continued.)



# SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS

by H. R. JONKER

②

Last week we saw that the major economic and social changes which have taken place in our Western society in the last two centuries, are an immediate result of two fundamental changes in social goals and values; namely, the renewed and increased emphasis upon social value generally known as materialism, and, a gradual but pronounced shift from the social goal of individual freedom and responsibility to the goal of greater and broader material equality.

This week we hope to look at the changes in the Eastern way of life, the forces responsible for these changes, and the social goals and values underlying them. We will come to the conclusion, as will shortly be evident, that the Eastern changes, although drastically different from the Western changes since the mid-18th century, are nevertheless based on the same social assumptions and values; namely, greater material production, and equal distribution of products.

Before Lenin succeeded in overthrowing the old Czarist Government in Russia in 1917, Russia was primarily a feudal society, in which landlords owned large blocks of land which were rented to peasants at outrageously high rents. The government was autocratic. Any industrial activity that existed in the late 19th century was both financed and controlled by Western European capitalists. The autocratic government was ruthless, killing hundreds of politically insignificant people, when these threatened their authority. No such thing as the extension of the franchise materialized in Russia, so that the demands of the masses for greater material equality and greater individual freedom fell on deaf ears politically.

In 1905 a mass revolution took place. Hundreds of people were murdered because they demanded better working conditions and greater individual freedom. The revolution failed however because during its climax the government passed some minor liberal reform bills which satisfied a large sector

of the masses who probably thought that more reforms were to follow. These reforms however never came, and the masses' indignation and frustration intensified, until in 1917 Lenin successfully overthrew the Czarist regime and institutionalized a communist system of government with the goal of rapidly increasing industrial production and preparing the people for the Communist society which would be established.

In order to assess what this society would be like, or at least was intended to be like, it is necessary to realize that Lenin was on the whole a dedicated Marxist, swallowing the Marxian theory hook, line, and sinker. What did Marx say then about the future communist society, and why did he aim for its establishment?

Karl Marx held that all the historical and social changes that have and will occur, are the ultimate result of economic conditions. He believed that in every phase of human development, there existed some peculiar mode of production, and that this (no matter which mode of production it might be — feudalism, capitalism, or a slave society) produced antagonistic classes, one of which eventually overthrew the other; this overthrow was and should generally be accomplished violently, and is therefore known as a 'revolution.'

In the capitalist society, in which Marx wrote all his works (for he lived in England most of his life, and observed not only the Capitalist system there but also the Liberal-Democratic way of life), the two antagonistic classes were the workers and the employers — the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Because the bourgeoisie tried to make profits as high as possible, they "expropriated" the workers — that is, they tried to pay the workers as few wages as possible. Consequently, the workers would gain class-consciousness, and increased their opposition to the capitalist. They would soon realize that their demands would not be met, unless they violently killed the capitalists and overthrew the capitalist means of production.

In fact, this revolution was inevitable, Marx maintained, because any further increase and development in industrial production demanded that the capitalist system of production be replaced by the communist system, since in capitalism the workers were reduced to labour machines and treated as slaves, so that they obviously did not produce as much as they were potentially capable of, were they free from capitalist expropriation.

This philosophical theory of human nature, social values, and historical change Lenin accepted without criticism. In fact, he went further than Karl Marx himself had gone, for he "forced" this theory upon the Russian people in 1917, and tried energetically to apply what Marx had preached.

Lenin began therefore with socializing all industrial activity, and removed all those who were opposed to the Party's activity. Capitalism was abolished and industries were put under the Party's control as an act of "democratic" reform, for Lenin and his followers thought that the socialization of production and the abolition of economic classes would pave the way for greater and increased production and more equal benefits from it. This theory however turned out to be a failure in practice, for it was discovered that the socialization of all industrial activity was a step backward, instead of forward. The Communist Party thought that socialization of industrial activity would abolish "expropriation" of the workers and therefore relieve the workers of their misery of being forced to sell themselves on the labour market. But it turned out that the workers, instead of feeling unburdened, protested work "forced" by the government more than work for individual enterprise. For under the latter conditions, they were free to choose their place of employment and could leave one particular job if the employer made them work too hard. The introduction of the socialization of industrial activity, however, forced them to work hard at the job which the State assigned to them.

Lenin must have been continually disappointed in the desire of the workers or proletarians for the socialization of industry and the overthrow of capitalism. Today the workers in Russia have greater individual freedom than they had thirty years ago, and there is more room for individual initiative, even in the sphere of industrial activity.

Russia has made significant industrial advances since the October 1917 Revolution — advances which not only surpass the speed of industrial development of the West, but which (more important) reflect that Russian society also has set as its basic goal the maximization of productivity and materialism. Our daily contribution (in the form of work) to the production of human material wants and desires, is such a common and accepted fact that we often tend to overlook that it reflects the values which our society has adopted. Yet it is a major factor in both the Western and Eastern ways of life. It is a deeply embedded value in both the Communist and Democratic societies.

During the early stages of the Communist government, after the 1917 Revolution, one of its main social goals was the socialization of all industrial activity (as mentioned earlier), and the abolition of economic classes. The latter implied that all capital should belong to the whole of the people — the state — so that each individual would benefit from industrial production equally. "Contribution according to one's ability, and distribution according to one's needs" was Lenin's slogan. Consequently an equal distribution of the products of industrial activity was not only one of the main social goals in Russia, but soon became one of the main characteristics of Eastern society. In the thirties everyone was considered equal and wages were distributed equally. Even the government officials themselves were initially given the same wages as those of a labourer; but it was soon discovered that men were not willing to perform jobs which required more responsibility and ingenuity, for wages similar to those jobs which demanded no skills and responsibility whatsoever. Ever since the thirties therefore, there has been a very small but noticeable movement away from material equality. This movement however, is not a manifestation of a movement away from the social ideal of material equality; instead it is a manifestation of the fact that this social ideal, as most social ideals or goals, can never be realized in its most perfect ideal form.

In summary we may conclude that Eastern society, as Western society is based on two basic assumptions about social goals and values; namely, the tremendous value in, and importance of, the production of material goods, and the intended ideal of distributing these products equally.

This does not mean that there are no longer great and significant differences between the Eastern and Western way of life. Undoubtedly there are major differences, but these are more the result of different political systems, political values, customs, etc. than the result of differences in basic social values and ideals. Political and cultural values of the East and West are dissimilar, but economic and social values are fundamentally the same. In this sense, East and West are growing gradually closer together.

There is one other way in which East and West may be said to be growing closer together. Several

strong, and sometimes conflicting forces are today striving to mold a world philosophy — a philosophy in which materialism and socialism will undoubtedly play influential roles. The original marxist theory of the East has been modified to incorporate liberal elements, and the original liberal theory of the West has been modified to incorporate marxist elements. Both of these revised theories have become world-wide political and social creeds. The encounter between liberalism and marxism has become central to all international and national-political events. Every act of international relations is a reflection of this; every African and Asiatic country developing its nationalism, has to struggle with this. It seems that their bitter encounter and fierce battles are manifestations of their final disappearance, and in so doing paving the way for a new world-wide philosophy.

H. R. JONKER

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# PARENTS AND CHILDREN

by Adriaan Peetoom, B.A.

Last week we began a discussion of the curriculum of a christian school.

It is clear, that at this stage it is much easier to say, what should NOT be part of this curriculum than to offer a well rounded and considered package of programs.

Having understood this, we should consider some of the barriers which now exist preventing a truly christian curriculum.

The first, and most important barrier, is the tendency to measure all the activities in school. Stated simply, we ask: what good are report cards?

Little Albert comes home with a report card. He is proud of it. He is in grade 5.

	Term 1	Term 2
Social Studies	74	79
Spelling	69	68
Mathematics	72	73
Reading	80	79
Science	65	75
Music	B	A
Art	B	C
Lines of Memory Work	60	80
Habits	B	B
Cooperation	C	B

Have a good look at it. It could be your child's.

It could be assumed that we all want to understand what this report card means. We would call this a good report card. Few of us would feel called upon to telephone the teacher and/or principal, disputing their estimation of our child's ability.



One reason why we would not feel called upon to phone educators for explanation of report cards, is that we ourselves went through school accompanied by report cards, denoting success or lack of it in school. We do not question this procedure. Indeed we would feel shocked not to get them.

As a matter of fact, adult life has its report cards. Most of us experience the direct relationship between length-of-stay in school, success in school, (as expressed on report cards) and the level of income. We expect doctors and lawyers to earn more money than floorsweepers and farmers (ministers usually fall outside this scheme of things). In other words, we express success in life in figures, howbeit dollar incomes. We have never questioned this aspect of life very much either.

Let us ask ourselves this question: what is meant by these expressions? Albert has earned 79 in Social Studies in the second term. He earned 74 in the first term. He improved by 5."

Again, what does it mean?

First of all, we know what is meant by "social studies". The term is favoured by those educators, who feel that Geography and History cannot be separated as subjects in school, and should be studied as one discipline.

What is meant by the figure 79? We know that it means: marks out of one hundred. The scale teachers use to evaluate work of pupils runs from 0 to 100.

Zero stands for utter failure, one hundred for perfection. Zero is never awarded, one hundred rarely.

50 is usually understood to be sufficient for "passing". 75 and up is reserved for those who shine in the subject.

So you see, Albert did well. He almost shone in his subject the first term, he definitely did the second term.

But, we ask, why 79? Why not 80? What would have been the injustice of awarding him 78? What is the difference between 78 and 79, between 79 and 80?

Teacher, what are you trying to tell me? I do not understand.

Is this what you are trying to tell me? At the beginning of the term you have available a body of facts which you would like to become the mental property of your pupils. Albert was successful in mastering 79% of these facts.

How did you measure this? Did you give him a test at the end of a term? Did you test all the facts? Did you only use a sample for testing purposes? If you only used a sample, are you sure that the sample was an adequate one? Could you have made a wrong



assumption? Could it be possible that Albert really only knew 50% of the facts, but that the test presented him with questions for which he knew the answer in 79% of the cases?

Can we really ever be sure that any test measures knowledge of facts? Are you absolutely sure? The figure 79 looks so absolute, so forbidding, so coldly efficient and objective. Really, teacher, should it not have been 80?

Maybe the teacher did not measure mastery of facts. Maybe the teacher attempted to measure the mastery of approach to a subject, the understanding of it.

For example, the teacher could have taught the subject by expecting the pupils to a varied sampling of peoples and places, of national characters and geographies, of inhabitants in their lands. One day, during the second term, it dawned on Albert that the character of a people, and consequently its history, bears some relation to the climate and landscape of its habitat. Albert's eyes open, he shivers with excitement. He consults the encyclopedia, the public library (if he lives near one), his father's library (if he has a caring father), his minister's library (if his minister has more than just theological works). He searches, reads, looks, discovers,

and, just before the day of the test: HE KNOWS!! He has little time to organize his thoughts for the test, but it does not matter. HE KNOWS!!

Did your test measure this kind of understanding, teacher? But how can it possibly do this? A pupil either makes this type of discovery, in which case he should score 100, or he does not make this kind of discovery, in which case he should score . . . zero.

How, o teacher, could you score 79?

Would you mind telling me, teacher, how you measure discovery? Is it measurable? Or, is it simply there? Do you notice it in Albert's eyes, in his behavior, in his excitement, in his stories to his parents.

Teacher, you worked hard during this second term. You sat down at the end of the term, and honestly thought about Albert. I appreciate that you are concerned for him, that you are proud of him. I thank God that you want him to grow up as a capable child of God, that you share our concern for him, our hopes for him.

I do think what we have been had, both of us. You have been taught to express progress in social studies in a cipher (I like this word "cipher" much better than the word "figure" or the word "numeral"). I have been taught to expect a report card with ciphers.

Let us both think about this problem for a while.

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The value of each scholarship is 4,000 guilders (about Can. \$1,210) plus free tuition for any course included in the regular program of a university or institute on university level. Successful candidates must pay their own return passage to the Netherlands, although an allowance will be made to and from Western Canada in order to compensate for higher travel costs.

Fields of study are unrestricted. University students and research workers must be working at the graduate level. Creative artists should have sufficient training and experience to take advanced work.

An illustrated guide for prospective students called "Study in Holland" provides information about the Dutch universities and other schools on university level; international schools and courses; what it is like to study in the Netherlands, etc. etc.

Candidates for a 1966-1967 Netherlands scholarship should write to the Director of awards, Canadian Universities Foundation, 75 Albert Street, Ottawa, Ontario.

At the same address copies are available of the illustrated guide "Study in Holland."

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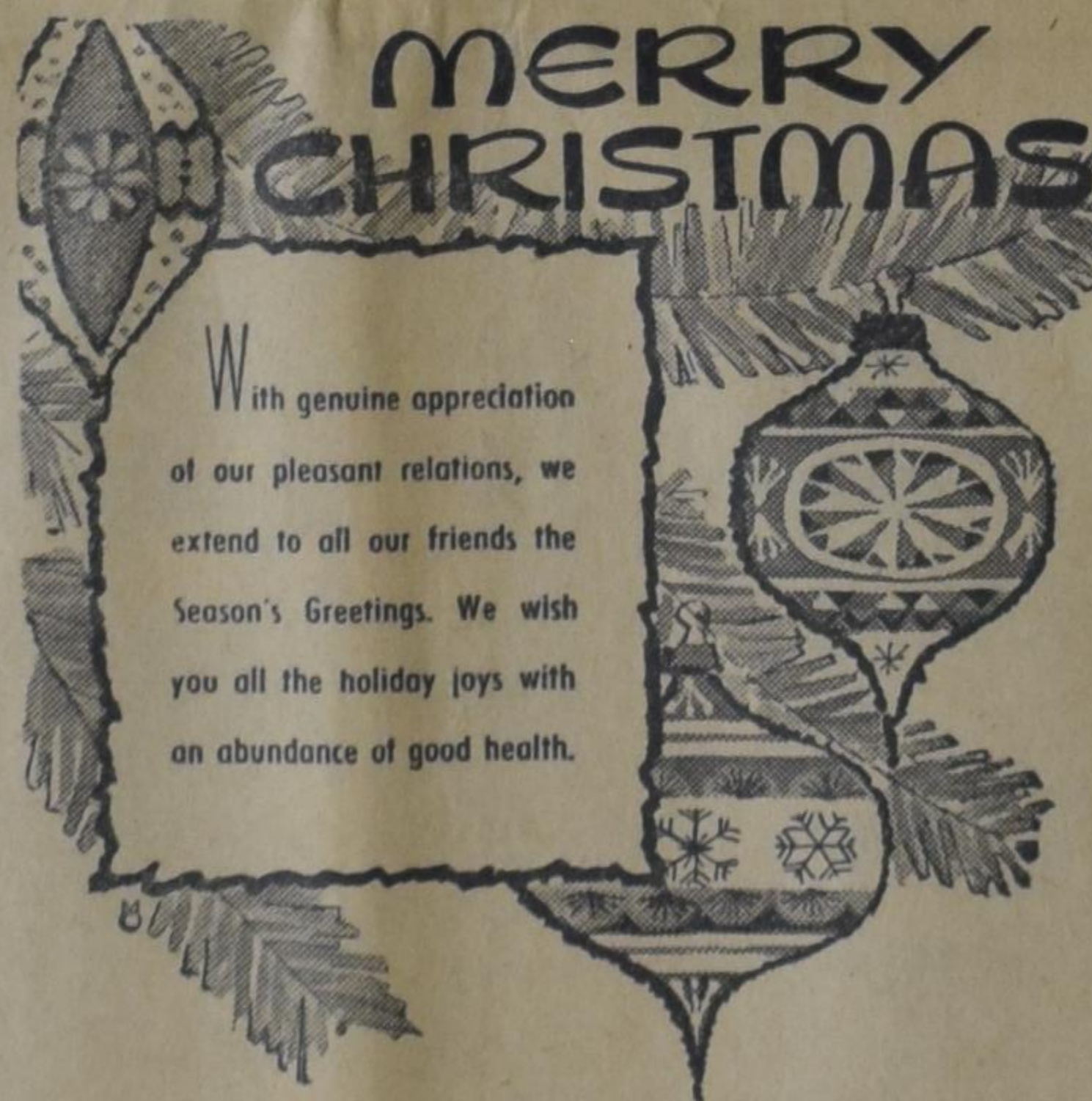
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